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THE FURNACEMAN.

By A. M'L. CLELAND,

AUTHOR OF 'GEORDIE'S JUSTICE,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN Geordie Donce died in Blacktown hospital, and was followed to the graveside by such a motley crew of boiler-makers, riveters, millmen, and nippers, with a fair sprinkling of women, there were many among the latter who regretted that he had never been married. The Blacktown women of the working-class had keen eyes for the good points of a likely husband (in this bearing a strong resemblance to their sisters in higher spheres of life), and were unanimous in their opinion that the foreman of Top Lane Works would have made a model 'man' for any girl who could have found favour in his eyes.

But Geordie had lived and died a staunch bachelor, dwelling alone in his queer little house, squeezed in among boiler yards, foundries, and locomotive sheds, his few wants attended to by a niece, the only woman ever allowed to step beyond his threshold. A confirmed misogynist, who, strange to say, was not altogether disliked by the womenkind around him.

For more than one mother took note that no child was ever 'frighted' by the looks of the stern old man, with his grim visage, his grizzled gray hair, and straight-cut thin lips. Nor were there wanting some among the younger women who, had they been pressed upon the subject, might have told of sundry occasions upon which they had consulted Geordie upon some *affaire de cœur*, drawn by that unerring instinct which tells a young girl who among her male acquaintances may be trusted to guide her in such delicate matters as love, courtship, and marriage.

But perhaps the best indications Geordie gave that he held that divinest of all possessions—a feeling heart—were connected with those too frequent and often fatal accidents of which

Blacktown had its share. For this was long before the days of the Employers' Liability Act, long before the idea of the legal protection of machinery was regarded as anything more than the dream of a body of meddling faddists. And when a man left his home and children in the morning, and was carried to his wife in the afternoon an almost unrecognisable mass of quivering flesh, little was the hope of future bread for the orphans left behind.

It was then that Geordie, that taciturn, unsocial bear of a man, took comfort of a solid and practical kind to the heart of the widowed mother, accompanied by dire threats of what would happen if she ever breathed a word about it to any living soul.

Such visits were always made at night-time, when the moon was down, and none in Blacktown but the recipients knew of Geordie's many acts of charity. So his neighbours had some excuse for looking upon him as a cross-grained, gnarly species of animal, whom it was wisest to humour as much as possible.

Great was the public wonder, too, when his married niece, his sole relative and legatee, announced that her total inheritance only amounted to exactly twenty-seven pounds thirteen shillings and fivepence, which sum lay to her uncle's credit in the Penny Savings' Bank. And yet he had been in regular employment all his life, and had always stuck to his work like wax.

But now that he was dead, the objects of his benevolence could keep silence no longer. They bruted abroad his many kindly acts. Women told how the gates of the 'House,' more horrible to them than the gates of Hades, were opening to

admit them when Geordie's strong hand pushed them to. Others spoke of times when their 'man' being sick, and the cupboard bare, Geordie's watchful eye and open purse had kept the wolf from the door. And so, little by little, the truth became known, and the man whom few had understood in life was known and honoured in his death.

Yet this old man of forbidding aspect and unattractive appearance had had his romance in his younger days. Love and a woman had come to him, as they come once, at least, to all men. He had built his *Chateau en Espagne*; had played a rubber with Cupid—and lost.

But the episode had taken place so many years ago that none in Blacktown remembered it. And besides, at the time it happened, Geordie was working for Jabez Drew at Castor Heath, two or three miles out in the country, and any one in Blacktown would have told you on the day the old man was buried, that Jabez Drew, the well-known ironmaster, had died at least thirty-five years ago. So time had obliterated the memory of Geordie's love-story from the minds of all but one lonely old man, who was not over-clean in his habits, much given to strong language, and habitually clothed in iron-stained moleskins and a waistcoat which had once been of fur, but which, at the time of his death, bore a strong resemblance to a piece of black and greasy leather.

Yet, as the manager of Top Lane Works knew only too well, the late foreman had been unequalled for integrity, honesty, and faithful service, in spite of his reprehensible language and quaint attire.

Had you known Geordie in those far-off days, when he was head furnaceman at Castor Heath Ironworks, you would have found him to be as fine a specimen of a British workman as those days produced. The type has changed somewhat since, the spread of education and other softening influences having made the best of our toilers something more of men and less of brutes; but when Geordie was a young sprig of twenty-six, or thereabouts, the majority of the workers in the Black Country were gigantic, muscular, and ignorant fellows, much given to fighting, drinking, and swearing, yet not without some capacity for nobleness.

The head furnaceman at Castor Heath stood six feet three-and-a-half inches in his clogs, was as active and upright as a Life Guardsman, possessed a tuneful voice, which could roll out as good a tenor song as one would wish to hear, and was known amongst his *confrères* as the jolliest and most good-natured man in all the yard.

It was a pleasure to watch him at work in those days. He put such a whole-hearted swing into it, as if the greatest joy in the world was to stand in front of a glowing puddling furnace for twelve or thirteen hours a day, while the perspiration ran in streams down his bare breast and arms, and his brawny muscles stood out in beautifully rounded and glistening masses, as he worked up ball after ball of soft metal.

And never did work seem so easy, never did the balls appear so light as during that summer after he and Liz Perrin had come to an understanding, and were to be married in the autumn. Harder and harder the furnaceman worked in

front of his glowing fire, thinking the while that thus it was he would work for Liz in years to come. The balls of metal threw out dazzling and radiant stars of light as he carried them to the jaws of the 'alligator,' or to the rumbling shingling hammer, keeping him in mind, he thought, of the bright eyes of his sweetheart.

And as he watched the lambent blue flames, flickering here and there over the surface of the half-plastic mass of ruddy metal beyond the furnace doors, working at it vigorously the while till it should 'come to nature,' what could be more like the colour of those same bewitching eyes than the colour of the dancing flames.

The wooing of Liz had not been an easy matter. An only daughter, somewhat spoiled by father and mother, a beauty of the healthy buxom type by no means uncommon in the Black Country, where parents are physically as perfect as possible, and a coquette who loved to exercise her power, Liz had dallied with Geordie and some half-dozen others for a long time ere she had finally succumbed to the big furnaceman, with his honest laugh and good-tempered nature. Both father and mother thought she might have looked higher, might have chosen Tim Snacker, for instance, who owned a house and furniture in his own right, while Geordie had nothing but his fortnightly wage.

However Liz had apparently fixed her fickle affections on Geordie, and the happy lover flung about the iron balls for the following two months as if they had been but feather weights. He took a house in Milton Row (then but a cluster of cottages, but now a fair-sized suburb of Blacktown), which lay about a mile from the works and maybe two from Burter's Buildings (the latter being a kind of mushroom hamlet that had sprung around Naylor's ironworks), lying on the far side of Castor Heath. And almost every other evening the loungers about the 'Buildings' might have observed Geordie's tall figure stalking down the heath-side, and making straight for a certain house at the end of the row of squat cottages.

The new home in Milton Row was partly furnished by Geordie's own hands, the work giving him the keenest pleasure. He kept this part of his happiness entirely to himself, allowing Liz to understand that they were to live with his old landlady for a week or two after they were wed. He wanted to surprise his newly-acquired treasure by leading her straight to what was for the future to be her own home.

The cottages in the Row were so much alike that a stranger would have been puzzled to tell one from another. Each contained a living room on the ground floor, with a kind of outhouse beyond, while above were two tiny bed-chambers, reached by what was more like a step-ladder than a staircase. Into one of these quaint boxes of houses, which rose straight from the edge of the road, and were destitute of the tiniest scrap of garden or yard, Geordie brought sundry articles of furniture. He bestowed his greatest efforts on the bridal-chamber, carrying thither a small chest of drawers, very loosely fitted, an iron bedstead, and a picture. Somewhat short, one would think, of a complete bedroom suite, but wanting nothing, in Geordie's opinion, when he had hammered four tennypenny nails into the walls for Liz to hang her clothes on, fastened the picture behind the door,

put the bedstead in frocks, and bestowed a ewer and basin on the top of the chest of drawers.

That ewer and basin would have told any one in Milton Row (no one saw them, for they were smuggled in one evening after dark) to what a height Geordie had raised Liz in his affections. For the ladies and gentlemen of the Row, when they found leisure and inclination, not to mention soap and towel, to perform their ablutions, usually adjourned to the outhouse and employed the slop-stone. But in one of his furniture-hunting expeditions to Blacktown, Geordie had observed a ewer and basin standing upon a chest of drawers, and being informed by the shopman that they were used for 'weshing' in, had purchased them forthwith.

He had also noticed in the same establishment a picture of a bed in 'frocks,' and the idea had taken his fancy; it looked so genteel, he thought. Not knowing, however, what material the frocks were made of, and being too bashful to inquire, he had hit upon the brightest thing he could think of. The bedstead was accordingly frocked by Geordie's own hands, and he looked forward with the keenest delight to witnessing his wife's surprise and pleasure when she should see the two sides and one end of the green painted iron bedstead girt about with short 'frocks' of shining oilcloth, bearing upon it a startling pattern in red and yellow.

No clouds arose upon the horizon of his happiness during the time these preparations were being made. Not even when it was hinted to him, and pretty broadly—as was customary among the denizens of Milton Row—that Tim Snacker was seen rather too frequently about a certain house in Burter's Buildings; not even then did Geordie suspect evil days.

He was told he ought to keep a close eye on Liz, in case she gave him the go-by.

'Not me,' he replied, with his hearty laugh; 'let Liz have her fling. She'll settle down to the best wife the Row ever seen when we're married.'

'Then tell her old man not to let Tim be there so often,' urged one well-meaning friend.

'Not me,' he replied again; 'Tim's right enough. He's better off than me, I know; but then Liz loves me, lad, and she doesn't love Tim.'

Whereat the friend shrugged his shoulders and went off, with an inward hope that all would be well, leaving Geordie with his undimmed happiness.

'No, no, my lad,' he thought aloud; 'Tim's got more brass nor me, but he's not the man I am. Fancy her takin' to a fellow as goes about every evenin' dressed as if for Sunday, with his woman's ways too. No, no. If, and he laughed outright at the utter absurdity of the thought, 'if Liz gives me over for any one, it'll be for a finer fellow nor Tim. Besides,' he went on, 'it's on'y nat'ral she should like the young fellows to see her, an' nat'ral enough they should like to cum. They may cum just as often when Liz is my missis.'

From which you will gather that the big heart was not big enough to hold any portion of jealousy. His sweetheart loved him, of that he was fully assured, and what better guarantee could he have?

So he continued to tread the primrose way, with never a thought of thorns in his path, and

in due course the sun rose on his wedding morn. A resplendent sun it was, flooding the whole land with light, making even the dull, black, and grimy precincts of Milton Row somewhat beautiful by imparting to them a transient golden glory.

Long before it was necessary, Geordie was up and had had his breakfast. He had resisted his landlady's entreaties that he would let her cook him something tasty on that morning. No, he would put away all idea of feasting and merry-making till the afternoon, when he should lead Liz, in a march of triumph, to the new home in Milton Row.

So his breakfast, as usual, consisted of a couple of fair-sized rashers of bacon, with plenty of bread, and a mug of ale (for in those days tea had not become the democratic herb it now is), and then across the way to the barber's.

'Goin' to get married, are you?' the man of the razor asked, as Geordie entered his little shop, seeming to fill it with his herculean figure and genial beaming face.

'I am so,' his customer replied, with a broad grin.

'Well, I wish you luck, lad. It's about the best thing a young fellow of your age can do, though I was never given much that way myself. What art laughing at?'

For Geordie's mouth had exploded with a loud guffaw, scattering the lather from his lips as it did so. Every one knew that old Tarpin had already led four brides to the altar, and was now looking around for the fifth.

'At any rate,' he went on, getting his customer under control once more, 'Liz is a good girl by all accounts, though a bit flighty, I'm afeard, a bit flighty. Keep tight hold of the reins, lad, an' drive steady when trouble comes, as come it must, o' course. An' never be too anxious to have the last word. An' don't always keep looking in pot to see what goes inside. Wife'll manage all that if you let her alone. No, lad, no; I never takes payment from a man as is goin' to be married.'

'Then come an' drink her health this a'ternoon,' said Geordie.

'Ay, I will, with all the pleasure i' life. I'll step over to Burter's Buildings an' shake hands with the bride.'

So, with this assurance, the bridegroom adjourned to his lodgings to array himself for the wedding.

Geordie in his bedroom reminded one very strongly of a Newfoundland dog in a hen-coop. He had to bend his head on entering lest he should strike it against the low lintel, and needed to be extremely cautious in the matter of flinging his arms about, for fear his knuckles came in contact with slate or rafter; and it would have puzzled any one to determine how the six-foot-three-and-a-half man slept in the five-foot-four bed, without thrusting his feet through the narrow window. However, if he had ever noticed these little inconveniences, he certainly did not mind them this morning.

He dressed leisurely, and with great care and pride. His wedding outfit had been chosen rather with a view to contrast than harmony. Bright blue striped trousers, brown jacket of a large check pattern, crimson necktie, black bowler hat, and boots polished almost to flashing point.

These in themselves were resplendent enough, but when he had added a light-coloured fur waistcoat, the effect was absolutely startling in its originality.

'I'm not goin' to shame Liz to-day,' he said, as he fastened the waistcoat across his ample chest, and regarded its large white bone buttons with complacent pride; 'an' I'll bet anythin' that nothin' finer than this 'ere rig-out has been seen in Milton Row for many a long day,' an observation which was perhaps perfectly correct.

Geordie had longed to possess that waistcoat for months past. He had first observed it in the window of a 'general dealer's' shop in Blacktown one day in the previous spring. The rich softness of the fur and whiteness of the buttons had caught his fancy, and he had registered a vow that, if ever Liz became his, he would wear that garment on his wedding-day. When Liz had actually promised to be his wife, he had journeyed up town the very next day, and had striven to strike a bargain with the general dealer, but the latter asked too high a price. Nothing daunted, Geordie began to wage a weekly war with him, and gradually worked the price down to a figure within his means, and carried home the garment triumphantly.

At last his preparations for the ceremony were almost complete. He only wanted a posy for his button-hole, and that was ready waiting for him down in the kitchen, held upright by the neck of a broken bottle standing in a mug of water. The bowler hat, as far as he could judge from the reflection in the diminutive bit of looking-glass fastened against the wall, was inclined upon his head at the right angle; his well-oiled hair showed from beneath it in the most approved style; the ring—most important of all—of the thick and solid variety, was safely deposited in one pocket of his waistcoat, and now he was ready to set off.

As he was giving himself a final and careful survey before stepping downstairs, he heard his landlady calling him.

'George, George,' she cried, 'come down at once. Yer wanted quick.'

Something in her voice made Geordie uneasy; a strange fear crept to his heart.

'What's up?' he asked, half-way down the steep stairway.

'Cum an' see, poor lad, cum an' see.'

Entering the stuffy little kitchen, Geordie was greatly startled at seeing his sweetheart's mother seated there, her disordered dress and distressed looks boding some terrible ill.

'Hullo!' he ejaculated, 'what's up?'

'Geordie, Geordie, she've gone,' Mrs Perrin burst out, breaking into tears as soon as her prospective son-in-law appeared.

'Who's gone?' Geordie queried, setting his teeth hard and looking sternly at the weeping woman in front of him. He knew he was no favourite with her, and suspected—well, he would have found it hard to say what he suspected.

'Liz hev,' Mrs Perrin gasped.

'What?' cried Geordie, seizing hold of her arm and shaking her roughly. 'Speak plain, can't ye.'

'She've gone, Geordie. She went off last night with that wretch, Tim Snacker.'

'Yer a lie,' he shouted, as he flung the woman's arm fiercely from him. 'It's all a dirty trick to get Liz away from me. I know well you never liked me.'

'Trick!' exclaimed Mrs Perrin indignantly. 'Do you think I'd trick my own girl to her shame?'

'There's no shame,' Geordie replied. 'Tim has put a power over her, an' 'ticed her away. Liz ain't to blame. I reckon she's at home again now, waitin' for me.'

'Geordie, lad,' the distressed mother went on, laying her hand on his arm and standing close to him, while her voice took a softer tone, 'I be feared there is shame, though sad I am to say it.'

And feeling the gentle touch on his arm, hearing the gentle words, and seeing the genuine sorrow in the streaming eyes raised to his, the conviction began to force itself upon him that, in some way he was too dazed to understand as yet, his beautiful dream had vanished, his love was lost, his hoped-for happiness gone for ever.

He sank into a chair, and sat with hands covering his face and elbows on knees, as Mrs Perrin told how she had gone up to her daughter's room that morning, and found it had not been occupied during the night, while on the pillow of the bed was a tiny note. The note, ill-written and worse spelled (for her daughter's education, though greatly lacking in many things, had advanced so far), ran thus:

'DERE MOTHER—i must go with Tim tell him i can't marry him i wanted to tell him misell afore but was ollers frited and i be frited now at what i do but i must.'

'Ay, ay!' sighed Geordie, as Mrs Perrin came to the end of the pitiful little missive, 'he put a power over her; 'tweren't her fault.'

At first the mother had not believed it, but had searched high and low, expecting, poor body, that there might be some chance of the misguided girl returning.

'Geordie, I would a' spared thee this, lad, I would indeed. I allow I'd thought she might a looked higher, but when she took thee and allus seemed glad to see thee, I was glad, too, for my bairn's sake. Tho' I do mind now she hev' seemed unsettled and queer-like of late, but I put it all down to feelin's, like as any girl has nigh on her weddin'!'

Geordie's right hand went out to her, and rested on her shoulder.

'Say no more, mother, say no more,' he half-whispered in a choking voice. 'Tis all Tim, all Tim!'

By this time two or three of his friends, who were to have escorted him to Burt's Buildings as bridegroom, had entered the little apartment, and were looking in amazement at the unusual scene in front of them.

Before the landlady had time to give them any particulars, Geordie raised his tall form from the chair on which he sat, and came towards them. His face had grown strangely hard and set in the few minutes which had elapsed since he had left his bedroom. As he turned towards where they stood, his glance fell upon the little posy standing in the mug of water. He took it out, and slowly crushed the homely flowers in his strong hands, and threw them under the kitchen grate.

Then placing his finger and thumb in the right-hand pocket of the fur waistcoat, he drew out the heavy gold circle, and having bent it twice, dropped it into the hottest part of the glowing coals.

'Chaps,' he then said, 'there's to be no weddin' to-day, for'—then he paused, as if doubtful how to continue—'for reasons as I ain't goin' to speak on.'

He spoke so calmly that his friends were deceived. Evidently the matter could not be very serious, and he would soon get over it. But the women, shrewder and sharper, waited for more, and were not surprised when Geordie, first placing the bowler hat firmly on his head, moved towards the door, and remarked generally as he did so:

'I'm goin' to Tim,' adding significantly, as he reached the outside of the house, 'you can come and see it if you like.'

With that he passed the barber's shop, turned to the right by the 'Pig and Pipe,' and in a couple of minutes had reached the Heath, and was striding across it in a north-westerly direction, towards the point where Tim's stone house was situated.

BANANA-GROWING FOR THE MARKETS.

By ROWLAND W. CATER.

THE headquarters of the banana trade in Nicaragua is Bluefields, until recently the capital of the Mosquito Reservation, whence about a million bunches are, or were, annually exported to the United States. Early in 1894, being in the neighbourhood and desirous of gathering information, I visited Bluefields, intending to journey to the Cama River, a branch of the Bluefields River, where a citizen of the United States had a very extensive and profitable plantation.

I am writing in the past tense as a matter of prudence, although I have no reason to suppose that this gentleman's plantation is less prosperous than it was, or that he has changed his peculiar residence for a more ordinary one. But Bluefields and the Mosquito Reservation are now under Nicaraguan rule, which is by no means as stable and free from vagaries as it ought to be; hence the desirability of writing of things as they were.

The planter whom I desired to visit had built his house in a tree, presumably to escape the malarious vapours of the lowlands. It was a substantial structure, I understand, boasting of three stories, erected round the trunk and lower branches, which ran through the middle of the rooms like masts in a ship's cabin. This novel residence was well furnished and perfectly safe, being supported by piles in addition to the trunk, and 'stayed' with ropes of raw hide. The owner gained access by means of a primitive, yet well-made elevator; and once inside, with the door closed, he was beyond the reach of snakes, wild beasts, thieves, and every other possible enemy.

I never saw the American's aerie. My preparations for the journey had just been completed, a boat and crew engaged, &c., when the Nicaraguan government seized Bluefields, deposed the king, or chief, Robert Henry Clarence, dismissed the council, judges, and magistrates, hoisted the flag

of Nicaragua in place of that of Mosquito, and subjected the town to martial law. I am not going to enter into the political aspect of the seizure. That is now ancient history. But it prevented my journey to the Cama River. However, I was able later on to gather the information I needed. This was on the Rama River, another tributary of the Bluefields, or Escondida, at the plantation of an acquaintance, Mr Lesley, also an American, like the tree-dweller.

But for the banana and the plantain, the natives of Central America would have to live by the sweat of their brows; possessing the banana and the plantain, they may toil or not, as they please. There is no necessity. A fortnight's intermittent labour will supply a man and his family with food for a year. During the eleven months and two weeks remaining they may swing in their hammocks if they think fit. Their dinner will always be within arm's reach, so to say. One of the 'notions' of that much misunderstood and unfortunate reformer, Colonel Walker, the 'filibuster,' was to destroy every banana and plantain tree in Nicaragua. It would have been a task for Hercules. Whether he was in sober earnest, or merely expressing a wish, is of no consequence; he was right in his conclusions. Only by doing so, and making replanting a penal offence, could he hope to overcome the innate indolence of the people and compel them to be industrious and happy.

For the planter with small means—that is, with a capital of £200 upwards—I know of no occupation so certain to realise a decent income as growing bananas, provided that the plantation is within easy reach of the sea, and there are steamers to carry his produce to New Orleans, New York, or London. That is of prime importance. For the rest, he may tickle the soil and it will laugh with a harvest. He need not take any risk. He may sell his produce to the captain of the fruit-steamers for 25 cents a bunch, pocket the money, and have done with it. And this plan has many advantages.

Botanically, there is scarcely any difference between the banana tree and the plantain. Both are *Musa sapientum*, but the latter is also *Paradisiaca*—*Musa sapientum*, variety *Paradisiaca*. Now that the banana has become almost a regular article of food in this country, it is quite unnecessary to describe it. Everybody knows what it is like, but the large, solid, farinaceous fruit of the plantain is less familiar. There are many other species of *Musa*, but these two are the most important.

The banana is cultivated from suckers springing from the roots of an existing tree, generally known as the 'stool.' These suckers are detached and planted. They strike, and shoot up so fast that it is no great exaggeration to say that you can see them grow. In a year or less the planter harvests the first crop.

The banana has no trunk, but a soft, fibrous, so-called stem, composed of the leaf-stalks rolled one over the other, which grows to from 10 to 20 feet in height, and withers after the fruit has ripened. The tree is seldom known to seed. The roots, however, furnish shoots or suckers year after year, until the stool is exhausted. The purple flowers blossom on long spikes, springing from the cluster of leaves which appear to open

out from the stem. The flower-spikes are often 4 feet long, and the bunch of fruit which succeeds the blossom comprises from eight to twelve dozen bananas, weighing from 30 to 60 lb. The leaves are from 6 to 10 feet long, and from 1 to 2 feet wide. When the leaves are newly opened, the tree has a most graceful appearance.

For successful cultivation, a cool, rich, and moist soil is required, the alluvial deposits of the river-bottoms, or the higher land where rain is abundant or water plentiful. Bananas grown on high ground are said to be finer than those of the valleys.

In preparing a plantation the trees and brush-wood should be cut down, and after lying a month to dry, burned, and the ashes spread over the land. The suckers, which, being very abundant, may be purchased at a low price, are then planted at a distance of from 12 to 15 feet apart, or say 200 to the acre. In Mexico, as will be seen presently, they are often planted much more closely, 1000 trees to the acre being common. After the first crop is harvested the stems should be cut down, chopped into short lengths, and heaped round the roots, whence spring the new suckers. A proportion of these only are allowed to grow from the stool: the remainder are removed and sold, or planted elsewhere. Like the first tree, they grow as by magic, and bear fruit within the year. It will be seen, therefore, that a large plantation may be formed with the greatest ease, while by judicious management and attention to the time of planting the suckers, a constant succession of crops is secured and fruit gathered every week throughout the year.

All that is required as regards after cultivation is an occasional weeding, say, twice during the year, and the removal of suckers and uprooting of barren stools. When the stems cease to bear fruit, or the fruit is poor, the sooner the roots are dug up and a new sucker planted the better. The expenses of the necessary cleaning and replacing are very small. The only careful work required on a plantation is in handling the massive bunches. This must be done so as to avoid bruising them, or a small black spot will appear, followed by rapid decay. Care is also necessary in gathering the bananas, but experience has taught the native labourers, when cutting the stems, to gauge their blows so that the first will cause the ponderous bunch to droop slowly until it nearly touches the ground, when another cut severs it from the tree.

The bananas are then collected and carefully loaded into a cart, boat, or railway truck, as the case may be, and conveyed to the nearest port to await the arrival of the fruit steamers plying between Bluefields and New Orleans. Sometimes they are packed in waste cotton from the ceiba tree, but this is not general. The average price, if sold on the plantation or at the port, is 25 cents U.S. currency (or 1s. 0½d.) per bunch, while if carried to New Orleans they realise from 30 to 50 cents per bunch. Some of these bananas, like a proportion of those grown in Costa Rica, find their way to England *via* New York, and when sound often realise from seven shillings to twelve shillings per bunch; but if intended to be carried so far they must be packed carefully and in a very green state. In the year 1894-95 upwards of a million and a half bunches of bananas were

imported from Costa Rica, worth £240,000, or an average price of about three shillings per bunch. The value of the bananas imported into the United States from Nicaragua in a single year has exceeded six hundred thousand dollars.

At the plantation on the Rama River where I was staying I obtained the cost and profits of plantations of various sizes. The figures given below relate to one of twenty acres in extent. Land may be purchased at five shillings the acre, or leased at an annual rental of 5 cents native currency (1½d.) upwards. The outgoings are calculated in native currency; the profits in that of the United States.

TWENTY ACRES.—First year.

Dr.	£	s.	d.
20 acres of land at 2 dols. 50c. an acre.....	5	0	0
Surveying and titles.....	4	0	0
Clearing.....	40	0	0
4000 Suckers at 25 dols. per 1000.....	10	0	0
Planting at 10 dols. per 1000.....	4	0	0
Weeding at 7 dols. per acre.....	14	0	0
Harvesting: Forty days' labour at 75c. per day.....	3	0	0
Total cost.....	£80	0	0
To balance.....	128	6	8
	£208	6	8

Cr.	£	s.	d.
4000 bunches at 25c. U.S. cur- rency each on the plantation	208	6	8
	208	6	8

Profit.....£128 6 8

In the second year two bunches may be expected from each stool, or 8000 in all, of the value of £416, 13s. 4d. While the cost of cultivation in the second year will be, for two weedings, £28; removing overplus of suckers, £4 (the cost of which may be covered by their sale or recouped by planting them out); and harvesting, £6—total, £38. The profits of the plantation, therefore, for the second year, will be £378, 13s. 4d. This will continue until the stools are exhausted, when they must be grubbed up, and suckers planted in their stead. With the trees fifteen feet apart the suckers may be planted between them when the first signs of exhaustion appear, so that there shall be no break in the yield of the plantation.

As each stool sends up from six to ten stems by the end of the third year, it is possible to reap that number of bunches from each original tree, and four or five stems are sometimes allowed to produce fruit. But the bunches will be much finer if only two stems are permitted to mature; the others, if not sold or required for extending the plantation, should be cut off high up, or bent down, so as not to cause excessive bleeding from the stool, in which case the stool will not only yield finer fruit, but remain in vigorous health much longer than if allowed to exhaust itself.

In a recent bulletin, issued by the Bureau of the American Republics at Washington, it is stated that sixty-nine acres of land will yield 54,000 bunches of bananas, worth, in the market, a minimum price of 37½ cents U.S. currency, or about 1s. 7d. per bunch=£4275; but I cannot endorse so large a profit. In British Honduras, which offers facilities even superior to those of Mosquito, with the inestimable advantage of a

stable government, the profits of a banana plantation are said by Mr Morris, assistant-director of Kew Gardens, to range from £12 to £15 an acre after the lapse of eighteen months.

But the banana can be most profitably grown in connection with other crops, for which it serves as a shade plant. For indiarubber, the cultivation of which promises such magnificent profits, it affords admirable shade; also for cacao, coffee, vanilla, &c., as the banana plantation can be so regulated that it will provide shade all the year round.

In Mexico, where 1000 suckers to the acre are often planted, the profits appear to be very large. The figures given by Sir Henry Dering in a recent Foreign Office report would show that the total cost of cultivating an acre of bananas, including the purchase of the land, is £6, 1s. 10d., and the return for the first year £27, 1s., a profit of £20, 19s. 2d. per acre; while the cost for the second year is under £3, and the return £54, 2s., a profit of £51, 2s. per acre.

Sir Henry Dering also supplies a mass of information, the greater part of which is equally applicable to British Honduras. We append a few extracts:

'The banana will grow in nearly every soil, except those composed almost wholly of sand or of calcareous matters. The best soil is a warm, well drained, but rather moist, deep loam. The best elevation is 700 to 1500 feet above sea-level, but many varieties do extremely well at a moderate elevation in the mountains, provided they are protected from the withering blasts of high winds. The sucker, when planted, should be about two feet over all, and four to six months old. It should be placed in a specially prepared hole, and when the land is poor a little manure can be put at the bottom of the hole. After planting, the earth should be firmly pressed down by the feet all round the sucker. In seven months a long spike bearing clustering flowers, surrounded by coloured bracts, shoots forth from the clustered leaves, and minute bananas soon appear at its base. During the growth of the plant the land must be kept free from weeds.

'Before the plant throws out its flowering stem, suckers will make their appearance. While the plant is young all these should be cut away except one. Afterwards, when the stool has matured, from three to five stems may be allowed to grow, which at three or four months old may be sold or transplanted to a new plantation; but on no consideration should a larger number be allowed to shoot up if fine bunches of fruit are looked for. After the stool has borne a crop or two, the earth should be loosened round the stem, and manure or decayed leaves and banana stalks forked in, the whole being moulded up with surface soil. With proper cultivation, a rich soil, and a suitable climate, the first crop may be gathered in ten or twelve months from the time of planting, and at all times thereafter.'

The banana planter in Mosquito has an exciting moment occasionally. I was sitting with Mr Lesley, my Rama River friend, soon after dawn one morning, awaiting early café, when Diego, the head mozo from the next plantation, came rushing up. His face was livid and covered with sweat; his eyes seemed starting out of his head.

'Señor! señor!' he cried, between a sob and a shout, 'culebra!'

Snakes were common enough in the neighbourhood, I knew, but luckily, fatalities seldom happened. It was clear, however, from the man's agitation, that something dreadful had taken place. Mr Lesley took down his gun, and we joined the terrified mozo, who at once led the way back to his hut.

'I was asleep, señores,' he panted, as he ran, 'with my wife and little ones. Suddenly I awoke. Something, a rustling, a whisper, aroused me. So dark it was in the hut that I saw nothing—but I listened. Again I heard it. "Por la Santa Virgen, salvame!"—Ay de mi, señores! it was my wife, who lay on my bed of stretched hides near the window. "Mariquita!" I cried. "Speak to me!"—There was no answer, but a horrid hissing. Then I smelt the creature's fetid breath, and I knew my poor Mariquita was in the coils of a constrictor!'

'Señores,' he went on, in a voice broken by emotion, 'I had no gun, and my machete I had dropped in the forest. So I ran to you for aid. We shall be too late, I fear; but there is vengeance, and she, querida mía, my lost one, shall be saved from that horrid grave!'

'And the children?' cried Lesley breathlessly.

'I carried both from the hut.'

It is scarcely necessary to say that we ran as fast as the uneven, narrow forest path and the mist would allow us to do. The distance was not great. Diego's hut stood on our side of his master's plantation, a long way from that gentleman's bungalow. Emerging from the forest, we rushed across the clearing. With his gun at the ready, Lesley entered first. He had outstripped both Diego and me. I heard two shots. Lesley met us at the door.

'I've killed the brute,' he said, 'blown its head off; but I'm afraid it's all over with the poor woman.'

It was not, however. Diego's wife still breathed. But she was fearfully crushed, and she never recovered. I refrain from describing the spectacle upon which I gazed when I entered. Fortunately such scenes are rare. The boa, or python, measured fifteen feet in length, and was as thick as a man's thigh.

One consequence of this terrible adventure was that Mr Lesley told me all the snake stories he could remember, or so I should judge from the number of them. He had seen men die from the bite of the Corale, of the Tamagasa, and the Campanilla, or rattlesnake, but Diego's wife was the first person seized by a python within his experience.

'I guess snakes don't trouble me much,' he added. 'I keep pigs, and when I hear of a rattler being seen about, I send a herd of pigs to the spot. Many a pretty fight I've witnessed.'

'Do pigs kill the snakes, then?' I asked.

'I calculate they do,' he answered. 'Why, Zapatera—that's an island in Lake Nicaragua—swarmed with snakes years ago. I'm told it was as much as a man's life was worth to stroll around there, for I guess there were nearly as many snakes as mosquitoes. Corales there were, and rattlers by the hundred. Well, an Italian thought the island would make a first-class pig-farm, and so he landed a cargo. Them pigs just fattened on

snakes, I'm told—ate 'em all up, or mostly so, and now they grow cacao, and sugar, and coffee on Zapatera.'

Mr Lesley's yarn was quite new to me, although I had dwelt within sight of Zapatera for some time. I give it as it was told. All I can vouch for is the cacao, sugar, and coffee.

'A real good set-to between a pig and a snake is worth going a yard or two to see,' my host went on. 'When the grunter sights his enemy I calculate he drops on all fours—doubles up his knees and tucks his legs out of the way of danger. Then he shuts his eyes and squints through his eyelashes with a sort of confident smile. The snake strikes, but he doesn't hurt the pig much. I guess the fat neutralises the poison somehow. The grunter bides his time. By-and-by his chance comes. He catches the snake by the neck, just below the head, and I guess there's another dead serpent in about ten seconds.'

Of the value of pigs as snake traps I have no personal knowledge, but there is no doubt that a herd will pay the banana planter very well. It sometimes happens that the fruit-steamer does not call when expected, and in consequence a quantity of bananas become too ripe for exporting. Unless pigs are kept, a great deal of such fruit is generally allowed to rot.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

By FRED WHISHAW.

CHAPTER XI.

MEANWHILE Philipof had been removed to the fortress-prison. Those who have seen St Petersburg will remember well the building, with its marvellously delicate golden spire keeping guard alike over dead emperors and the living persons who have conspired against them or their people. The church of St Peter and St Paul is the mausoleum of the Romanof dynasty, and here may be seen the tombs of all the Tsars and Tsaritsas from the days of the poor little German princess who had the misfortune to marry the great Peter's ill-starred son Alexéy, until now. Outside the church doors are the walls of the so-called fortress, which surround it, and beyond these again are the waters of the Neva, for the entire mass of buildings is erected upon a small island in mid-stream, an island once in possession of and fortified by the Swedes, but wrested from them by force of arms by Peter the Great in person. This spot was the nucleus of the city of St Petersburg, which was built up around it by Peter's orders in the beginning of the eighteenth century. At that time the fortifications were principally wooden, but these were afterwards pulled down and walls of solid masonry substituted. The old wooden erection, however, would have been nearly as capable of resisting the attacks of the heavy ordnance of the present day as are the stone walls which now rise out of Neva's waters, and the title 'fortress' is merely given to the building as a courtesy-title in consideration of its importance as a citadel in the days that are no more, when wooden walls, if thick enough and high enough, were sufficient to keep an enemy at bay until he succeeded in setting fire to them. The guns of the present

day would knock the St Petersburg fortress into builder's rubbish in five minutes, for the capital of Russia is practically undefended, so far as any defensive works of its own are concerned. But twenty miles or so from its harmless fortress walls, and in the path of any warships that might think to steal a march upon the defenceless city, there lies day and night a Cerberus, known as Cronstadt.

In the narrow neck of the Gulf of Finland this watch-dog has his kennel, and there he lies from year's-end to year's-end, and shows his teeth to all who come—a double row of terrible fort-teeth, which would grind to powder any who came within reach if on mischief bent. Woe to the warship, be she never so heavily-armed and armoured, that ventured within reach of the awful jaws of the Cronstadt Cerberus! What with her forts and her torpedoes, her chess-board of submarine-mine works, and her fleet of coast-defence ships of many shapes and sizes and armaments, Cronstadt is as awkward a spot for the approach of a hostile naval force as there exists on the face of this earth: in a word, it is impregnable.

Hence little importance is attached to the so-called fortress of St Petersburg, which is used mainly for the double purpose of a mausoleum for the emperors and of a prison for the political offenders of the realm.

It was to this retreat that poor Philipof was brought by his escort of excited policemen; the real culprit—the student—being conducted by a second detachment to the same destination. His thoughts during the drive, and for some time after his arrival, when he was thrust into a small apartment and left alone, were so confused that he was only conscious of a kind of numb, speechless feeling of indignation. He was not particularly frightened even when thrust into his little prison-chamber and left, because he still felt sure that his conduct would be justified and himself released in a very short while: some one must have seen how the episode actually occurred, and would reveal the truth, and justice would be done—there was no doubt of that. But he was very angry, so angry that for quite a long time he could do nothing but helplessly nurse his wrath, and let it boil within him in a confused and indiscriminating sense of burning indignation. After a while he grew calm enough to bethink him of his position, and to look around the room into which he had been thrown. There was not much to occupy his attention here. A tiny chamber of about ten feet square, furnished with a bed—a very plain, hard-looking one—and a chair which looked even plainer and harder. There was also a washing apparatus—a thoroughly Russian article, designed to suit a non-washing people like the Russians, and consisting of a basin with an overhead cistern of water and a pedal for the foot below, by pressing which a few drops of fluid were allowed to trickle from a tap into the hands outspread to catch them. This is the manner of the middle-class Russian's washing, the central idea of which appears to be to do everything in one's power not to get wet.

This was all the furniture. The room was lighted by a tiny barred window, six or seven feet from the ground, and Sasha climbed upon his chair to look out of it. As he did so a small

aperture, made by a sliding panel, appeared in the door, and a gruff voice bade him come down again.

'None of that, now!' it said; 'no climbing on chairs or fooling with the window-bars—it's against rules and carries a penalty.'

Philipof jumped off the chair quickly and looked round. 'Come in, for God's sake,' he said, 'and talk to me, whoever you are—there are things I must know'—

'Against rules!' replied the voice. 'I am not allowed to talk to prisoners.' And the window closed with a snap.

At this a great flood of bitter indignation swept over Philipof's heart. For the first time he realised his utter helplessness—thrust away here out of sight of friends and justice. What had he done to deserve it? Fool that he was, why had he not allowed the student to work his will upon the Tsar, instead of interfering in matters which did not concern him, and thus landing himself in a scrape to which it was impossible to affix a probable limit! Sasha rushed to the door and banged at it with his fists and kicked the panels with his heavy Russian boots.

Instantly the window opened and the same gruff voice spoke again—'Penalty for violence,' it said, 'the knot: six blows first offence after warning; twelve for the second. You are warned.'

'But look here, my man,' Philipof began, 'just tell me this'— But again the window was slid back in his face, and Philipof listened helplessly to the heavy tramp of his guard, as that worthy took himself out of reach of the temptation to break rules by talking to a prisoner.

For a full minute poor Sasha stood with clenched fists and blanched face, the prey to a thousand conflicting impulses. Then he burst into a roar of laughter, and threw himself upon the little hard bed in the corner: the droll side of the affair had occurred to him, which was perhaps the best thing that could have happened just at this crisis, for it saved his brain from the tension which for the last hour or two had threatened to upset its equilibrium.

It was very funny, he reflected, after all! Here was he, an officer of one of the Tsar's finest regiments, and a good officer too, he flattered himself!—cast into prison suddenly and unexpectedly—what for? For saving the Tsar's life. It was quite on a par with the usual conduct of Dame Fortune towards him! There were some people whom this elderly lady detested, and he was one. Others were her favourites—like Dostoief, and such men could do nothing wrong! If this had happened to Dostoief, now! If he had knocked up a man's arm and prevented him from shooting the Emperor dead on the spot, what would have happened to him? Why, the Tsar himself would have seen the action, or the police would—at any rate somebody in authority would have observed it; and the Tsar's preserver would have been led up to the Tsar's carriage amid shouts of applause, and the Emperor would have fallen upon his neck with tears and protestations of gratitude; promotions and wealth would have been showered upon him, titles also no doubt, and all Russia and the world would be ringing to-morrow with the glory of his deed. And here was he, Philipof, who had done the Tsar this

very service, arrested and chucked into a dirty prison-cell like any common malefactor—and—yes—and actually threatened with the knot! It was too ridiculously absurd, and Philipof laughed aloud; but when he had laughed enough, his nerves required a reaction, and he shed bitter tears and lay upon his bed cursing his fate, and cursing the Tsar and Dostoief, and the student, and the police, and everybody he could think of upon whom a malediction would lie.

And so, laughing and cursing and foolishly crying in turns, the unfortunate man passed the evening and shivered through the night; and when the gray light of dawn came through his tiny window and awoke him from a fitful sleep, the only occupation open to him was the rapid walking up and down his room in order to restore circulation to his stiffened limbs and to keep himself decently warm.

THE PROVIDENCE OF BOOK-HUNTERS.

By ANNA BLACKWELL.

[THIS article was written by an old contributor, in one of the latest years of the sixties, when the authoress was an intimate friend and near neighbour of the father and sister of Robert Browning. Every one of the facts recounted was communicated to her by the father of the poet, their intimate friend the late M. Milsand of *La Revue des Deux Mondes*, and the late Hon. G. P. Marsh, at one time U.S. Minister at Constantinople, at Florence, and at Rome. Several of these facts occurred in their own experience, others in that of their friends or acquaintances; while the truth of each fact was amply vouched for.]

To the proverbial saying that 'Providence looks after the lame and the lazy,' there ought to be a pendant declaratory of the special aid and guidance that seem to be vouchsafed, by some occult and favourable influence, to the brotherhood of book-hunters.

That one who is always seeking should occasionally light on something worth finding is certainly not surprising; but the most wonderful thing is that when the book-hunter has set his mind on getting some rare volume, the desired object in the long-run very often comes into his possession.

As examples simply of the usual connection between seeking and finding, to which are due the ordinary joys of the book-hunter's existence (examples of the extraordinary ones, the 'special providences' shall be cited afterwards), take the following, gleaned by the writer, like all the others, from actual experiences of collectors.

A work on astrology, believed to be unique, without title-page, but bearing date 1473, and consequently one of the earliest specimens of printing extant, having been brought out about twenty years after the discovery of the art, exquisitely printed, with all the capital letters put in by hand, some of them being done in gold and others in colour—was picked up at a London bookstall for fifteenpence.

A copy of Bedmar's 'Squittino della Liberta Veneta,' 1612—a work so rare that its very existence has been denied—was bought at another London bookstall for sixpence.

The possessor of the first volume of a very rare Italian catalogue, for which he had paid a guinea (deeming it a bargain at that price), found some years afterwards, at a continental bookstall, the second and third volumes of the same rare catalogue, and bought them for sixpence.

A book-hunter who was already in possession of the original manuscript of Fleming's 'Decline and Fall of the Papacy,' published in the reign of William III.—which manuscript was shown to George III. on account of a passage in it which contained a prediction that the years 1793 and 1848 would be fatal to the papal power, although, according to this prediction, the final destruction of that power would not be consummated until half a century afterwards—picked up a copy of the earliest printed edition of this work, now extremely rare, for twopence, at a bookstall.

Two very rare old Spanish poems, so scarce that for years past the dealers had declared it to be impossible to procure them, were found, one after the other, at two different bookstalls in Paris, by the same collector, and bought by him; one of them for two sous, the other for ten sous.

A work in two volumes, entitled 'The True Secret History of the Lives and Reigns of all the Kings and Queens of England, from King William, called the Conqueror, to the end of the Reign of the late Queen Anne. By a Person of Honour. Printed for D. Browne, Jr., at the Black Swan, without Temple Bar, 1725'—a work so rare that it is not to be found in the British Museum—was picked up at an old-clothes shop in Walworth for sixpence a volume. This copy was subsequently lent by the finder to the late Lord Macaulay, who got from it the anecdote about William III. telling how that sovereign used to become so exasperated by the presence of idlers among his soldiers that whenever his servants stole into the camp to have a look at the trenches, his majesty would sally forth from his tent and cane them for their intrusion; and how both servants and soldiers used jocularly to speak of the reception of these summary castigations as 'being knighted.' *Apropos* of which dislike of the royal leader to the presence of civilians among his troops, will be remembered the manifestation of the same dislike by the Duke of Wellington, who, in his determination to keep idlers at a distance, not only procured the passing of an act of parliament subjecting to camp discipline all persons who were proved to have remained three days within the lines, but threatened to flog the women who used to frequent the battlefield after an engagement for the purpose of robbing the bodies of the slain.

A Parisian book-hunter, passing through Dijon, discovered, in a box of miscellaneous rubbish outside the door of an old-clothes shop in that city, a copy of a poem entitled 'Clovis,' published about the beginning of the seventeenth century—a work of little intrinsic merit, but one which, having been set down as 'unfindable' for half a century past, was regarded as 'invaluable' by collectors. This treasure, purchased by its discoverer for one sou, was by him subsequently exchanged with a brother collector for some costly and valuable literary rarity. Shortly after this exchange had been made, to the equal gratification of both parties, the same book-hunter who had found 'Clovis' stumbled, just as unexpectedly, on a second copy of that same 'unfindable' poem,

which he bought, for a mere trifle, at a bookstall in the same ancient metropolis of Burgundian wines, mustard, *cassis*, and 'spice-bread.'

The results of the book-hunter's loiterings among bookstalls are not, however, always productive of rejoicing.

A friend of the writer's, when searching for a certain very rare book along the whole line of stalls on the quays of Paris, discovered a pamphlet against capital punishment written by Robespierre in his lawyer-days—a work which he had never seen or heard of, and whose existence he believes to be unknown to collectors. On plunging his hand into his pocket in search of the copper coins which would have enabled him to transfer the precious pamphlet to his own possession, he discovered that, by some untoward chance, he had forgotten to provide himself with the five sous to which he prudently restricts his daily investments along the quays and among the other haunts of the Parisian dealers in old books. Intending to return home in quest of the requisite coppers, as soon as he should have completed his investigation along the quays, he continued his walk in search of the rare book for which he was looking, and which, to his great delight, he presently found at another stall. Enchanted with the results of his walk, he hastened home to provide himself with the sous that were to bring the two treasures into his possession, and returned with all diligence to the quay. But, alas! short as had been his absence, both pamphlet and book had been purchased and carried off.

The quays of Paris are the favourite hunting-ground of all the book-hunters who have ever visited the cosmopolitan caravanserai on the banks of the Seine; and the habitual outlay of the most diligent of the brotherhood appears to be limited to a few sous per volume. The late eminent collector, whose name, Libri, smacks of predestination, used to say that his best purchases had been picked up on the Paris quays; and that other eminence in the same line, the late Dr Yarnold, the friend of Belzoni and John Kemble, used frequently to remark that, in making his acquisitions, he 'never went higher than the fourpenny boxes.' Yet, after his death, his collection sold for £400.

So much for the 'common mercies' of the book-hunter's life. As examples of the 'special providences' already referred to, take the following:

A London book-hunter of the last generation gave to his son, as the 'nest-egg' of his future library, a translation of 'The Life and Character of Theophrastus,' minus the title-page, but attributed to Coleman. On giving this book to his son, the father wrote his name on the fly-leaf. A few years afterwards the son, accompanied by his beloved books, went to Jamaica, where the translation in question was borrowed of him by a military officer on service in that colony. This officer, being unexpectedly transferred with his regiment to another colony, quitted Jamaica very suddenly, inadvertently taking with him the borrowed translation; a circumstance which caused great annoyance and regret to its owner, who prized it very highly as being the gift of his father and containing that parent's handwriting. He made various attempts to learn the whereabouts of the officer who had so carelessly carried off the treasured volume, but

could never obtain any tidings of him, and at length relinquished the effort, and gave up the book for lost. Five-and-twenty years afterwards the book-hunter, having returned to London, was one day strolling along the Old Kent Road, and peering about him as usual, when he came to the shop of a dealer in old iron, near the then-existent turnpike-gate which formerly stood nearly opposite the burial-ground. As he glanced into the dingy depths of this shop he suddenly espied his lost translation, stowed away upon a shelf. Hastily entering the shop, he bought back his missing treasure for the sum of sixpence, which the man of iron seemed to think himself very lucky in getting in exchange for it. The presence of his father's handwriting on the flyleaf was still as legible as ever, and rendered it certain that the volume, so strangely recovered, was the identical one the loss of which he had so long deplored.

The dens of dealers in 'marine stores,' be it noted *en passant*, are much frequented by the book-hunting fraternity; those dealers being in the habit of buying up vast quantities of old books, which they tear to pieces for the purpose of wrapping their leaves about the second-hand pokers, kettles, nails, and frying-pans purchased by their customers. Ferreting among the piles of old books thus waiting to be torn up is often found by the book-hunter to be profitable employment during a spare half-hour.

A collector went one day to the shop of a well-known London bookseller for the purpose of procuring a copy of a certain catalogue of Italian books which the dealer was in the habit of bestowing gratis on his customers. On glancing over the contents of this catalogue, the book hunter's attention was specially attracted by the mention made therein of a very rare and valuable work, in two volumes, entitled 'La Libreria del Doni Fiorentini,' printed in 1580; the first volume only of which work was marked in the catalogue at one guinea. As he walked homewards from the dealer's with the catalogue in his hand, meditating somewhat ruefully on the price of the volume, which he would have purchased but for the fact that the guinea very far exceeded the amount to which he habitually restricted his purchases, he happened to pass a cobbler's stall, when he suddenly espied both volumes of the rare work in question standing together on a shelf at the back of the dingy little den. A few moments sufficed to effect the transfer of the precious volumes, to his own joy and to that of the cobbler, who evidently thought he had done an excellent stroke of business in getting rid of them at threepence apiece.

The reader may or may not be aware that there exists an excellent English translation of Molière's plays published in 1751, and now exceedingly rare. This translation is advertised in the *Grub Street Journal* of that epoch as containing 'Designs by Monsieur Coypel, Mr Hogarth, Mr Daudridge, Mr Hamilton, &c., in eight pocket volumes.' Two of these translations—namely that of 'L'Avare' and 'Le Cocu Imaginaire'—had the honour of being adorned with frontispieces by Mr Hogarth. A certain book-hunter, who had already succeeded, after many years' search, in forming an unusually extensive and valuable collection of Hogarth's prints, chanced to hear of the existence of these frontispieces,

and forthwith set his heart upon adding them to his collection. On the day following the one upon which he had obtained his information he had occasion to go to Hackney in great haste, on an errand of kindness. On his way thither he saw a wheelbarrow full of old books standing at the door of a public-house, at whose tap the man in charge of the barrow, as he soon discovered, was just emptying a mug of beer. The book-hunter had stopped immediately, notwithstanding his hurry, to overhaul the contents of the wheelbarrow; when the very first book he took up proved to be one of the volumes of the translation for which he had determined to search. Hastily turning over the leaves of the volume he found to his unutterable delight that it contained both of the desired frontispieces in excellent condition. It may be added that the second of these two engravings so luckily found contains the portrait of Hipposley the actor, which Hogarth has also introduced into his print 'The Beggars' Opera.'

The same book-hunter also succeeded in making, at long intervals, a complete set of the first editions of all Milton's poems, with the exception of that of 'Comus,' which, to his sorrow, he never succeeded in finding.

But the proverbial 'slip 'twixt cup and lip' so common in the experience of ordinary mortals sometimes causes, as already remarked, cruel disappointments even to the most fortunate of the brotherhood. Thus Dr Yarnold, having meditated much upon the marvellous lifelikeness of 'Don Quixote,' arrived at the conclusion that, inasmuch as Cervantes could hardly have drawn the character and adventures of his hero from his own imagination, he had probably derived his idea of the immortal 'Knight of La Mancha' from the life and doings of some *bonâ fide* original; just as Defoe had obtained from the veritable history of Alexander Selkirk the idea which he so admirably worked out in his 'Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe.' Having come to this conclusion in regard to the great Spanish romancer, and being fond of expatiating upon it to his friends, the indefatigable book-hunter became extremely desirous to discover the supposed prototype of Cervantes' hero. For several years his inquiries and researches failed to elicit any trace of this supposed original. But, at length, happening to travel from London to Oxford by the stage-coach, he alighted from the vehicle at one of the ordinary stopping-places on the road to wait in the inn while the horses were being changed. On going into the bar he saw an odd number of some old magazine lying on the counter. He took it up, and, on opening it, his eye lighted on an article treating of Cervantes and his immortal romance, which the magazine-writer boldly asserted to have been suggested by the eccentricities of a countryman of the novelist, of whose real life and oddities he gave a sketch, purporting to be derived from authentic sources. Being abruptly summoned by the guard to resume his journey, Dr Yarnold threw down the magazine and got back into the coach. But no sooner had the ponderous vehicle cleared the precincts of the village than he bethought himself, with immense regret and self-upbraiding, of the carelessness of which he had been guilty in not making a note of the periodical in which he had chanced to meet with so unhoped-

for a confirmation of his own hypothesis. However, though greatly annoyed by the thought of his oversight, he consoled himself with the determination to look up the precious magazine on his return, and, if possible, to purchase it. But alas! when, a few days afterwards, the coach again deposited the returning book-hunter at the door of the village inn, the magazine had disappeared. None of the people of the inn had seen it or knew anything about it; and though the Doctor exerted his utmost ingenuity to ascertain the title and the publisher of this magazine, he could never obtain the slightest information in regard to it.

There is, in the library of one of the English universities a very rare work on the life of Richard III., of which, to the librarian's sorrow, one section is missing. A well-known historian happening to visit this library, the librarian showed him, as one of its rarities, the work in question, pointing out to him the fact of the missing section; 'probably left out,' he remarked, 'through inadvertence when the book was bound,' 'I, too, possess a copy of this work,' returned the historian; 'and as the section which is missing in yours occurs twice over in mine, the superfluous one in my copy is probably that which is lacking in yours.'

A couple of book-hunters—one French, the other English, but both residing in Paris—had occasion to consult Melancthon's 'Chronicon'—an extremely rare work whose existence was until recently unknown to the majority of collectors, and which is mentioned in only a few of the catalogues of the writings of this eminent reformer. Having searched in vain for this work in all the great public libraries of Paris, they gave up the quest as hopeless. A few days afterwards, when the idea of the work had passed from their minds, one of them, when loitering among the cases of old books on the quays, suddenly lighted on a complete copy of the 'Chronicon,' of which he at once possessed himself at an outlay of five sous. A couple of days after this unexpected acquisition by the English book-hunter, his French brother, strolling along another part of the quay, and equally forgetful of the object of his recent researches, came upon a second copy of the 'Chronicon,' in excellent condition, and carried it off in triumph at a cost of ten sous.

One of the most eminent book-hunters of the New World, who had been vainly endeavouring for many years to procure a copy of an extremely rare and ancient three-volumed work, the record of the travels of an Italian in the East, chanced, on passing through Genoa, to find the first and second volumes of this work in the shop of a dealer in old books. Two years afterwards, the same gentleman, on looking through the shelves of a bookseller in Turin, found the third volume of these old travels, and bought it, as he had done the two others in Genoa, for a very small sum.

A book-hunter of New York, who is believed to possess the fullest existing collection of books and records concerning the colonisation of that state by the Dutch, greatly desired to obtain a certain Dutch history of the early days of the settlement, so rare that only one copy of the work was known to exist. On one occasion, when ordering a quantity of Dutch books from the Hague, he put down the title of this work in his list, though without the least hope of receiving it. But, to his surprise

and delight, this rare work was sent to him with the rest of the books he had ordered, and at a moderate price.

Another American collector having received a London bookseller's catalogue in which was included a copy of the earliest French edition of Froissart, marked at eighteen shillings, sent immediately for this book, and duly received it at the price set down in the catalogue, although another copy of the same edition had been sold in London a short time before for £95, and the copy he had obtained so easily and at so low a price, being a very much better one, would readily have obtained £100.

Many years ago an eminent transatlantic publisher and book-collector set himself to obtain a certain collection of old Spanish ballads, so rare that only three or four copies were known to exist. In seeking for this collection, supposed to consist only of a single volume, he was long unsuccessful; but his search at last was richly rewarded by the discovery, in different places, of five other volumes of this same collection, whose existence does not appear to have been known to any bibliographer.

When, after the death of President Monroe, his library was advertised for sale, the same fortunate book-hunter was the first in the field; and finding among the treasures amassed by the deceased president a magnificent copy of Purchas's 'Pilgrims,' in nine volumes, he inquired the price of it. 'Three dollars a volume,' replied the administrator. The book-hunter instantly paid down the amount, thus obtaining possession of the work at the total price of twenty-seven dollars, though a very inferior copy of the same had recently been sold in London for £735.

This lucky collector had picked up an excessively rare work on the early history of America, with the title-page and first leaves missing, and several other leaves stained with water. The absence of the missing leaves had always been a matter of regret to the owner of this book, who prized it very highly. Several years after its acquisition, this gentleman, on opening a case of books that had been sent to him from London, found amongst the waste-paper that had been stuffed in between the books to keep them from rubbing, the whole of the missing leaves of the work in question, including the title-page. The ragged edges of all these leaves tallied exactly with those of the book from which they had evidently been torn, and all were marked with the same water-stains.

COUNTY COURT DAY.

It is, I am well assured, a safe assertion, however startling it may sound to some ears, that the average Londoner knows more of the manners and customs of the Boers of South Africa, or of the dark-skinned natives of Indian villages and South Sea Islands, than of the peasant population of many an English county. Such is nowadays the desire to acquaint one's self with that which is far off and strange rather than with the people who live, and the events which are happening, at our own doors, that, unless some 'show place, some widely known and much-praised stretch of

landscape, or some spot immortalised by having been the birthplace or abode of genius, attracts gazers in thousands, rural England is left severely alone.

The student of country life will naturally resort to the market, the inn yard, and bar parlour on the weekly market-days. In addition to these haunts of 'Hodge,' he will do well to visit a certain apartment of the Shire Hall on 'County Court Day.'

This apartment is entered, metaphorically speaking, by way of the office of the Registrar of the County Court. To this vestibule of justice resorts the creditor whose patience has reached its utmost limit; the shopkeeper whose ledger shows a long-standing account; the labourer suing a farmer or other employer for work done and disputed over; the village landlady who has provided board and lodging too confidently for some 'single man.' Here in short at one time or another come representatives of almost every class of the rural community; paying the shilling or two for the 'summons,' glibly swearing the necessary oath on the greasy Testament; and—the greater number of them—rehearsing at great length the circumstances of the case for the benefit of the Registrar's clerk.

Hither, too, on the morning of 'County Court Day,' comes a little company of debtors, eager to pay in the amount in dispute together with the trifling fees disbursed by the plaintiff, and thus save the further expense of 'hearing fees' and the discredit of appearing in court.

But the brisk strokes of the clock in the turret of the butter market have been followed in the announcement of the hour of ten by the deeper booming of the bells in the cathedral tower, and the scene shifts to the hall of justice itself, whither the clerks have already betaken themselves with their huge record books under their arms. Usually the Registrar himself hears the simple 'undefended' cases; those defended and to be tried before a jury await the arrival of 'His Honour.'

Crossing the quiet square—not the market square, but a second one a little farther down the street—and entering the gravelled enclosure where stands the great statue of a local celebrity of a century ago, the stranger is directed to one of the many chambers of the hall.

We pass down a passage, and opening a door continue forward until we enter an opening and find a seat in a small amphitheatre of narrow high-backed benches. The seats—some three or four rows—rise tier above tier, and a placard placed on either hand labels them respectively 'Plaintiffs' and 'Defendants.' Below is the 'well,' occupied by a sprinkling of lawyers and their clerks, who are seated at a baize-covered table furnished with quill pens and other accessories. Beyond, and slightly above this level, sits the Registrar with his clerk; and towering above is the empty chair of the judge who is yet to arrive.

Hovering about the witness-box, and making far more noise than he suppresses, is an official,

either a bailiff, tipstaff, or similar officer of the court. A fresh case has just been called, and the lady plaintiff rises from her seat in the row of benches. In a moment the officer is fussing about her like a wasp. The witness-box is approached by a complicated little maze of turns and steps. He pushes, pulls, cautions, and directs the woman till she knows not which way to turn. At last the commotion attracts the attention of the Registrar, a stout, jolly-looking gentleman with a merry eye. 'Let the woman alone. I dare say she knows her way,' is his remark, followed by dutiful smiles from the 'Court,' and the bailiff retreats with an injured air.

Safely in the box, the plaintiff fixes her eyes steadily on the Registrar, but is again thrown into confusion by interference from another quarter. A timid-looking little man, who is ensconced seemingly as guardian by the judge's chair, at last succeeds in his endeavours to attract her attention. It is some few moments before she realises that she has yet to be sworn, and longer still ere she grasps the fact that she must hold the Testament which lies on the ledge of the box in her right hand, and solemnly kiss it at the close of a formula repeated to her by the little man. But it is done at last, and she is all ready to state her case.

Meanwhile in the benches of the semicircle is gathered a motley group of litigants and spectators—men, women, and even children, for often whole families come in on 'Court Day' to hear the trying of the family case. Silence is of course the understood rule, but intermittent whisperings are kept up by one or other of the little knots of acquaintances, save perhaps when a witness is giving evidence of general interest, or the Registrar is announcing his decision.

For the first hour or so the proceedings are rather devoid of interest to a looker-on. Cases are called in which neither plaintiff nor defendant makes answer: the money having within the last day or two been paid direct to the former, and the court having had no notice of the settlement. More cases still are called in which judgment for plaintiff 'goes by default,' defendant not appearing. He knows his liability, has little or nothing to urge as palliation of his conduct, and does not think it desirable to show his face. A majority of the cases are those of grocers. The grocer is the one absolutely necessary tradesman to the cottager. Supplies of tea, sugar, cheese, and bacon will keep a labourer's family going without much recourse to the butcher. A town grocer usually puts a batch of overdue accounts in the court at once in order to save time and trouble. The village shopkeeper also will be here with two or three defaulters. Tailors and drapers are duly represented. 'Ready-made' tailors and 'packmen'—which latter have to a large extent taken the place of the old-time pedlar—do a large trade in the villages, and have generally a long string of cases on hand.

As a rule the dates of the accounts make it evident that great forbearance is shown in the matter of credit. Often the last entry in a grocer's account will be more than a twelvemonth old; he will have refused further credit, and have henceforth taken what money he can obtain for current purchases. But frequently the customer thus 'pulled up' takes umbrage and departs with the ready money to another shop—a course which

naturally has an influence the reverse of soothing on the tradesman's temper, and brings the errant one before the tribunal of justice much sooner than would very likely have been otherwise the case.

Once there, the defendant has little to urge in extenuation. Illness; husband out of work; these are the standard excuses. But she—it is nearly always the wife who appears—is invariably very clear on one point, namely that the debt can only be discharged by a series of the most homeopathic doses. A shilling a month is a frequent proposal from a labourer's wife towards a debt of five pounds or upwards. The face of the tradesman grows long, and the Registrar institutes an inquiry.

'Your husband is a labourer, you say. What are his wages?'

'Thirteen shillings a week, sir; and we've eight children at home. It's of no use wanting me to pay it no faster, because we can't do it.'

The plaintiff interposes. 'Two of the sons are in regular work, sir, and live at home; and there are two great girls who ought to be at service. Besides, they have a donkey and cart, and do a bit of carrying for the neighbours, I know.'

'No; the donkey and cart's my son's,' replies the woman, and so on. But the Registrar has formed his opinion after a word or two in a low tone with his clerk.

'Five shillings a month. I know that you can pay it well enough, so see that you do so.—Next case.'

So with considerable monotony the work drags on for another half hour, until the clock above the empty chair points to eleven, and the little man who administers the oath, and who has been absent from his post for the last few minutes, returns and leans over the rail to murmur respectfully to the Registrar.

'Oh, very well,' is the reply. 'Then His Honour will take the defended cases now.'

There is a flutter of expectation; a door behind the empty chair opens, and the judge appears, with the little man of the oath in attendance, hovering round in obsequious anxiety. The 'Court' rises to its feet and bows deferentially—the Registrar and his clerk, the lawyers in their fluttering gowns; while the country folk on the benches bob and curtsy after their kind. The judge gets into his chair of state—not without difficulty, for the space is somewhat confined; the little man arranges the curtain over the door carefully, that His Honour may be shielded from draught, and the first defended case is called.

It is that of a woodman, hailing from a rather remote village, *versus* a firm of timber merchants in the Midlands; and, briefly stated, the case is this. The defendants' firm having purchased, felled, and removed from the ground certain 'sticks' of timber, engaged the plaintiff to 'grub' the stumps and roots, and thus clear the ground. The dispute now before the court turns on the price per root to be paid. The plaintiff affirms that half-a-crown was the sum stipulated for; the defendants, denying this, say that they agreed for a shilling.

After a brief statement of case by his solicitor, the plaintiff is put into the witness-box: a spare, wiry old man, rapidly nearing, if not already past, the 'threescore-and-ten' limit. He touches his

forelock respectfully to His Honour, and then stands motionless, only withdrawing his eyes from the face of the judge at intervals to look at his lawyer. He is deaf; but his replies, when once a question is heard and grasped, are short and to the point. He has finished the work according to agreement; the price agreed for was two shillings and sixpence; and he has only received a cheque at the rate of a shilling. He is succeeded in the box by his witnesses, a couple of respectable-looking men, who state that half-a-crown is the usual price for the work done; and who also give evidence to the effect that they have seen the ground, and consider the job to have been properly carried out.

For the defence, the timber merchants are represented by their clerk, and do not employ a lawyer. The clerk states that a member of the firm agreed with plaintiff for a shilling; that payment has been made, the cheque sent being in full discharge of all liability; which cheque, having been accepted by plaintiff, is considered as sufficient receipt. Plaintiff, interrogated by the judge, says that he wrote claiming the further eightpence per tree the very day he got the cheque, he thinks, but 'he can't rightly mind.' The clerk denies that any such letter was ever received, and hands up copies of the whole correspondence to the judge.

'But here,' says His Honour, 'you refer to a letter of his dated the first of January.—Is that the day you wrote to say the payment was short?' he adds, turning to plaintiff.

'Ay, your Honour, it were just after Christmas, but I can't say to a day.'

The clerk is baffled, but returns to his great point, that the cheque was sent in full payment, and not being returned, must have been accepted on that understanding. The plaintiff still stands stolid, too phlegmatic—and perhaps too wise—to enter into direct argument with his opponent after the usual manner of rural litigants. His eyes return to the judge as his one hope.

'Ah yes,' says His Honour, breaking in unceremoniously on a lengthy but confused statement which the clerk is pouring forth, 'that's all very well, I dare say; but you know you can't expect a man of the plaintiff's position to be up in all the technical niceties of city business ways—returning cheques, and so forth. He was not likely to write by return or to send back the money, or any part of it he could get hold of. Do your employers think that such as he have a large balance at their bankers? Such arguments are absurd in a case like this. The man's evidence is straightforward; he has brought witnesses to prove the custom of the trade. You don't even produce the person who made the bargain to face him. Men of this class work very hard for a scanty living, and in my opinion are entitled to be paid promptly without the quibbling and delay there has been here. Take your papers. Judgment for the plaintiff with costs.'

There is no 'applause in court,' but there is a subdued buzz of satisfaction among the lookers-on who fill the benches. The clerk sits down with his documents, discomfited. But the plaintiff has not been able to follow the low tones and rapid utterance of the judge; he stands regarding him steadily. His Honour turning slightly, sees him, and his eyes rest for a moment on the weather-

beaten face. The keen shrewd face of the lawyer relaxes into a slight smile; not of contemptuous pity for an inferior, but of kindly sympathy for an unlettered man doing his duty according to his lights amid hard surroundings and for meagre pay. He raises his voice:

'I say they must pay you the balance—the extra eightpence—and the costs as well,' and he dismisses him with a good-humoured nod.

A look of grim satisfaction comes into the rugged face. The sinewy right hand is raised again to the forehead, and the old fellow tramps awkwardly from the box. One can well imagine in what terms His Honour will be discussed to-night before the inn fire, and for many a day in the cottage to the 'missus,' and over the low hedge to passing neighbours.

And thus the morning wears on, and the judge steadily picks his way among local customs and dialect, through rural obtuseness, never losing his temper, often with a kindly word to a confused and frightened witness, and with ear and brain alike on the alert to discriminate between truth and fiction—a difficult task when both come with equal labour from the slow lips. The hesitation, the long pause between question and answer, may be the result of endeavours to invent a lie; but they are quite as likely to be caused by the query being put in unfamiliar language. It is some time before the actual sense of the phrase dawns upon the rustic mind; longer still before he can shape his truthful answer into an intelligible sentence. To him the gentleman in the great chair, with the keen face framed in the full curling wig, is something almost more than mortal. The squire and parson have lost or are losing to a great extent that indefinable and intangible 'something' which partakes of the 'divinity that doth hedge a king;' but about the occupant of that raised and solitary throne, even when it is only 'His Honour,' and not 'My Lord Judge,' it lingers yet and cows the yokel into a submission well-nigh abject. A stern, harsh man, uttering 'great swelling words' totally incomprehensible to the rural mind, may impede the doing of justice to a serious extent. The shrewd lawyer, keen as a knife, yet able to unbend in a homely phrase, able when he sees due cause to 'help a lame dog over a stile,' may be an incalculable blessing to the district.

THE SCHOOL OF MUSKETRY.

NOTWITHSTANDING the enormous strides that have taken place of late years in the attention paid to the musketry-training of the British army, it must be owned that the same is still some way from being in a satisfactory condition. The real fact is that the system pursued is too much based on the old bull's-eye principle. Here is a fixed target, nicely painted; a well-sheltered range, measured out to a foot; every facility for seeing the mark; do not be in a hurry; adjust the back-sight carefully; take aim as long and as steadily as you may wish: good, a bull. And so on, till the ordinary soldier is converted into a 'marksman,' and what is more, believes himself to be a really fine shot. But, needless to say, this system,

however well it may be adapted to turning out satisfactory musketry—returns in peace-time, is apt to fall to pieces when our crack-shot finds himself firing on a range unprotected from wind, rain, and sun; where the distance has to be judged, and, moreover, where the target itself is returning the fire. Field-firing is the only true test of a battalion's merit—that is, where the troops are manœuvred in full marching order over a rough stretch of ground as in actual warfare, and where the targets are got up to represent hostile units, some running on a kind of tram-lines, others acting on the revolving-shutter principle, but all moving. For a good percentage of hits in this practice is far more valuable than a sprinkling of high individual scores made on a range at known distances. As in all other military pursuits, the secret of musketry efficiency rests largely with the officers; and here it may be stated that although the British officer always performs his duties, he has never yet been induced to get up any real enthusiasm on this particular subject. The reason for this lies probably in the sporting tendencies of his class, or as a staff-officer once candidly put it: 'If the target only kicked, or moved an arm, or ran away when struck, I could understand men enjoying blazing away for hours at it; as it is, this form of shooting at an inanimate object, useful though it may be, appears to me to be the poorest fun out.' An important consideration, therefore, is to invest all musketry practices with as much reality as possible, to abandon all foolish self-deceptive measures, but at the same time not to neglect the preliminary grounding exercises, which, though irksome, are absolutely indispensable. The *ne plus ultra* of such training is fortunately now to be found at the Hythe School of Musketry, and in the courses of six weeks' duration which are being perpetually carried on there.

The rambling old Hythe barracks had experienced many vicissitudes before a 'Corps of Instructors in Musketry' was established under a royal warrant in 1853, the staff of which took up their quarters here, first as a temporary measure, soon as a permanent one. For from the technical point of view, Hythe must be considered an ideal place for a school of musketry, and a man who learns to shoot well there will be able to shoot well anywhere. The whole neighbourhood, in fact, is given over to the worship of the gun-god. The great expanse of shingle, stretching in a huge crescent for some miles, is broken only by martello towers and the butts of the numerous ranges, iron mantlets are scattered about like huge mushrooms; while every week-day, from one end of the year to the other, as long as the light is good, the noise of rifle and machine-gun firing is incessant, and the scream of the ricochet bullet echoes curiously from the low-lying cliffs in rear. The Hythe course lasts about six weeks, and no sooner is one class dismissed than another takes its place. For administrative purposes, a 'school,' when it assembles, is divided into two wings, each of which consists of forty officers and seventy sergeants. The commissioned portion is under the command of a captain-instructor, the non-commissioned, of a lieutenant-instructor. These are again split up into squads of eight under a sergeant-instructor. The only private

soldiers to be seen about are a few duty men, utilised for fatigue purposes, such as painting the targets, cleaning the officers' rifles, and other small jobs of a domestic nature. As the work to be got through is of an extremely business-like character, relaxation in the matter of uniform is not only permitted but encouraged. The officer discards his sword for the bayonet-frog and Lee-Metford, serge jumpers and the oldest of overalls are quickly adopted, while shooting-boots of the stoutest description are necessary to negotiate the desert of shingle.

Work usually commences at 9 A.M., and each so-called parade, lasting half-an-hour, is followed by lectures in the class-rooms, where the black-board of one's school-days plays a prominent part. During the first fortnight the squad finds itself detailed to drill of a very elementary and irksome description. For, to begin at the beginning, the authorities act upon the assumption that the officer is entirely ignorant concerning the use of his rifle. Accordingly, he is given plenty of 'position-drill,' or as it is termed at Hythe, 'poke-stick'—that is, exercises in the different positions of shooting, standing, kneeling, and lying down; though, for the last two, little mats are provided to take the edge off the sharp gravel. Absolute accuracy is insisted upon, both in giving the instructions and words of command and in conforming to the same. Range-finding, aiming-drill, and judging distance practice are interspersed throughout the mornings, and the neophyte when considered well-grounded in all these exercises, is marched down to the formidable Hythe ranges, there to fire his course. For to obtain the desired certificate all must prove themselves to be at least 'second-class shots,' while to emerge from the ordeal a marksman one will have to be something out of the common. Many a man who comes with the latter reputation and cherishes the secret determination of showing the instructors a thing or two, finds to his dismay and mortification that here the standard is a high one indeed, often in fact but narrowly escaping the disgrace of being ploughed in his first attempt, and consequently being obliged to shoot the course over again.

The culminating practice, however, is when the whole school turns out for the great day's field-firing, commencing at ranges of 2000 yards, for which elaborate preparations have been made. Batteries of artillery (painted upon canvas screens) dash in and out upon trolly lines like the running-deer at Bisley; phalanx after phalanx of black heads pop up from the ground in every conceivable direction; and last comes a cavalry charge—a huge travelling screen of equestrian figures with fluttering pennons—which with the wind behind it gets up a very fair rate of speed, only disappearing into the bowels of the earth within fifty yards or so of the square, which, it is to be hoped, has riddled it through and through with bullets. The Commandant of the School always commands this engagement in person, and the result in the percentage of hits is awaited with great interest. A searching oral and written examination completes the ordinary course, though there is what is known as the 'extra,' a higher grade of honour, which requires some very hard work to obtain. As may be expected, the armoury of the school is a splendid one, containing every

type of machine-gun and a most interesting collection of small-arms; for it is etiquette among all the Great Powers (with the exception of France and her wonderful Lebel weapon) to send a standard pattern rifle to Hythe, which returns the compliment with the presentation of a Lee-Metford.

From the social point of view the school can hardly be termed much of a success. A mess of eighty which includes Guards, cavalry, rifles, line, militia, and an odd volunteer or two soon splits up into cliques, each keeping very much to itself. With the exception of two officers being detailed on Sundays to take the church parade, of ordinary military duties there are none; so from Friday afternoons till Sunday evenings—Saturday being an off-day—the school is practically deserted, as nearly every one either runs up to town or takes a trip over to Boulogne. At all seasons of the year Hythe is a place where the wind and sun combined manage to tan the skin very effectually; but after a summer course, with really hot weather accompanying it, all return to their regiments with the appearance rather of having just taken part in an expedition across the desert.

BECAUSE.

I LOVE you not because your eyes
Blue as the blue skies are,
Nor yet because your cheek outries
The summer roses far.
The locks of gold that cling and curl
Around your forehead fair,
Your ruby lips, and teeth of pearl
Did ne'er my heart ensnare.

'Tis true the blackbirds in the trees,
The larks in ether clear,
Will often cease their melodies
And list your voice to hear.
To match your hands no lilies grow
In wood or garden plot;
But for white hands and accents low,
Sweetheart, I love you not.

But 'tis because that voice so soft
Has kindly words for all;
Because the tears of pity oft
From your bright eyes down fall;
Because your hands are strong to do
Good for the poor and lone:
Because your heart is brave and true
My heart is all your own.

M. ROCK.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
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DEER-FOREST ROMANCE.

WHEN is a forest not a forest? The answer seems to be pretty plain: when it is a deer-forest. At all events, the Irishman who could not see the wood for the trees would run no risk of a similar disability if he scoured the large extent of country in Scotland devoted to the harbouring of the 'noble denizen of the forest,' as a preceding generation, in a literary or journalistic mood, might have termed the deer. Undoubtedly the name of 'deer-forest' is misleading to the tyro, whose sensations on beholding one for the first time may aptly enough be compared to those of the innocent and untravelled tourist in search of health and leanness, who, visiting the *Thiergarten* of Prince Metternich at Marienbad, finds it to be, not as he expected, a species of Zoological Gardens, but a park for the breeding and preservation of all manner of game.

Deer-forests may be regarded from many very different points of view. They may, in the first place, be regarded historically. To recall that little more than two centuries ago the Earl of Huntly possessed the whole stretch of country from Ben Avon to Ben Nevis, that this tract included the forests of Ben Avon, Glenmore, Glen Feshie, Gaick, Drumchalder, Ben Alder, and Loch Treig, that it extended to about two hundred and twenty square miles, and that over this area the proprietor administered the old forest laws with the utmost severity, is in some measure to realise the meaning of the dominant theme in Scottish mediæval history—the struggle between the crown and an enormously powerful territorial nobility.

Deer-forests, again, may be looked at from a legal point of view. It cannot be pretended that rights of forest have been as prolific of litigation as grants of salmon-fishing; yet many an honest guinea has been put into counsels' pockets by some debatable feudal charter; and an ancient grant to the Laird of Tilliesnaught of a right of hunting and fishing in the royal forests of Birse and Glencat, together with the right of keeping and bigging shields in the same, has given rise to

three several law-pleas, one of them quite recent, in the course of the last hundred years.

Then there is the statistical point of view. The fact that there are in Scotland one hundred and thirty deer-forests, covering a total of 2,552,383 acres, is both imposing and suggestive. It puts the calculator at once upon his inquiry into questions such as these: how many spinsters are there according to the last census for every acre of forest in the Highlands? or, what proportion do the points of the antlers of every deer in these forests bear to the number of the adult male population of our large cities? or, how many deer forests, cut into strips of a yard in width, would it take to reach the moon? Such instructive speculations, illustrated though they might be with elaborate and curious diagrams, are unluckily no concern of ours in this place.

Neither is it proposed to treat the subject in its political or economic aspect. For the moment, we know nothing of the relative merits of sheep and red deer, or of the amount of employment which they respectively afford to the natives of the country-side. The solution of these and many other similar problems may be tracked out by the inquisitive reader through a maze of blue-books. It is rather what may be described as the romantic side of the deer-forest and the sport it supplies which is to be considered in the present article.

On the one hand, every deer-forest in the country has its own peculiar and cherished traditions. On the other, the pursuit of the deer has long been felt to be one which makes 'other sports appear wholly insignificant' (to borrow the emphatic words of Scrope). These are propositions which it would be rash to gainsay; and they are fully borne out in the handsome and beautifully illustrated volume in which Mr Grimble has recently sought to enumerate and describe the *Deer-Forests of Scotland* (London: Kegan Paul & Co., Ltd., 1896). There is scarcely a stream, a hillside, or a corrie that is not invested with a multitude of associations which seem distinctively to belong to an age less prosaic and more imagina-

tive than our own. No doubt there is a very great deal to be said for the view that the life of modern, no less than that of ancient times is steeped in the unmistakable glamour of romance ; and Mr Kipling has done well to remind us, in one of the trenchant and memorable lines with which his recent volume of poetry abounds, that 'Romance brings up the 9.15.' Yet, without pausing to debate a question, which is, after all, almost wholly one of words, we may perhaps be permitted for once to identify romance, if not with an age which has entirely passed away, at least with habits of life and modes of thought easily distinguishable from the humdrum routine of everyday life.

Romance, to be sure, sometimes bears a less honourable connotation ; and in one sense it may be said that romance has clustered round the weight of many slain deer. This is due in great measure to the fact that no definite rule exists whether a deer shall be weighed 'quite clean,' or with heart, liver, and lungs included. The difference between the two methods may be gauged by the fact that the 'gralloch' is estimated to be one-third of the entire weight of the animal. There seems no reason to doubt that thirty-three stone, weighed quite clean, is the highest authentic weight recorded of any slain deer ; and the credit of the record is Lord Greville's, the scene the forest of Glenmore, and the date 1877. The poch-a-buie, or tripe, it appears, is never taken into account ; which might be considered unfair by the true wild Highlandman, who, if we mistake not, much prefers the flavour of ungralloched venison. What a glorious name, by the bye, would Poch-a-buie be for a Highland chief in a novel ! We make a present of the suggestion to the clever little band who are attempting what is sometimes called a Celtic 'revival.'

Romance has played an even more prominent part, in the same sense, with regard to the longevity of deer. What says the Highland adage ?

Thrice the age of a dog is that of a horse,
Thrice the age of a horse is that of a man,
Thrice the age of a man is that of a deer,
Thrice the age of a deer is that of an eagle,
Thrice the age of an eagle is that of an oak-tree.

This is to assign the deer a period of more than two hundred years ; and the estimate is supported by many highly circumstantial stories. Thus, Captain Macdonald of Tulloch, who died in 1776, aged eighty-six, is said to have known the white hind of Loch Treig for fifty years ; his father for a like period before him ; and his grandfather for sixty years before him. So, in 1826 Macdonald of Glengarry is reported to have killed a stag which bore a mark on the left ear identical with that made on all the calves he could catch by Ewen-MacIan-Og, who had been dead one hundred and fifty years. Analogous stories, it may be noted, are told in countries on the continent of Europe, where deer are to be found in any number. But, alas ! the Zeitgeist will have none of such narratives, however detailed and however 'well attested ;' and the general opinion among experts would seem to be that thirty years or thereabouts is the limit of a deer's life. The inference is drawn from this, among other circumstances, that in many deer admittedly of the age of fourteen or

sixteen, teeth are found to be missing, and it is argued that such loss of teeth is a sure index of incipient decay. The same test applied to mankind, would, we rather fear, point to a figure considerably smaller than the threescore and ten years that sum up the days and years we see.

Turning, however, to the more honourable and dignified signification of the word romance, we may first take notice of the class of stories which deals with beings of a supernatural order. Witches, warlocks, and fairies, as may be supposed, haunted most of the desolate tracts in the Highlands which afforded them such congenial accommodation. A tiny woman clothed in green is observed milking a hind ; the hind becomes restive ; the little woman impatiently exclaims : 'May a shaft from Murdoch's quiver pierce your heart ere night !' Needless to say, the luckless animal falls a victim before night comes on to the unerring skill of the mighty hunter so named. Or, perhaps, a couple of deer-stealers take refuge in a solitary hut, and pass so disagreeable and painful a night owing to the practical jokes of spirits and hobgoblins, that thenceforth the hut is left severely to itself. As we read these and similar tales, we instinctively feel that we have heard something very like them before, whether in the folklore of other nations, it may be of Maoris or of Bushmen, or in the floating tradition of the nursery, who shall say ? Such narratives at least throw light upon the motives which may prompt a more sophisticated age to acquiesce in the perpetuation of legends which had no ulterior object for one more simple and less conscious. A trusty keeper might well be disposed to announce that he had beheld an apparition in some spot which would have formed a convenient rendezvous for poachers ; a smuggler might more than tacitly encourage the belief that the scene of his illicit traffic was haunted by fairies ; while no prudent parent could afford to be remiss in impressing upon a young family the solemn fact that the deepest and most dangerous pools and mountain tarns were the abode of the water-kelpie.

The most formidable, perhaps, of the unearthly beings who peopled the deer-forests, at all events in the central districts of Scotland, was the witch of Ben-y-Gloe, which is the highest peak in the forest of Athole. This amiable enchantress, whose diet consisted principally of live snakes, delighted in every kind of evil-doing, but in none more than in assisting mortals to gratify the passion of revenge. Upon one occasion her aid was invoked by the Earl of Athole's cup-bearer, whose son, a robber, had been executed by the earl. The witch promised to abet his schemes of vengeance in three ways. She presented him with certain herbs, which, if given to his master's horse, should so madden the animal that it would dash out its rider's brains. She further gave him a deadly poison to put in the earl's cup ; and, lastly, she undertook, failing these devices, to conceal the cup-bearer in the earl's bedroom, so that he might stab him in his sleep. She clinched the matter by vowing the most horrid vengeance upon any one who, having heard her secret, should venture to disclose it before St Andrew's day. The earl's page had happened to overhear what was passing, and was much puzzled how to save his master on the one hand, and how to

elude the witch's resentment on the other, if he dared to divulge the plot. King James V. and his court, it should be said, were paying a visit at the time to the earl, who entertained them with what Captain Costigan called 'princelee hospitalitee,' and indeed had built a palace specially for their reception. When on the following day the cup-bearer, as usual, proffered the earl his 'morning,' 'Hold!' exclaimed Willie the page, 'and pray to the saints that their blessing may attend the day's sport.' The earl accordingly fell on his knees, when, to his great astonishment, the goblet instantly broke into a thousand pieces. But, the king being mounted, there was no time for commentary or delay. The earl's fiery steed is brought round; he makes ready to mount, but scarcely has he set foot in stirrup when the twang of a bowstring is heard, and the horse falls dead, pierced to the heart by the page's arrow. The natural annoyance of the haughty noble at such an occurrence is not sensibly diminished by Willie's somewhat lame excuse that he had been shooting at an eagle and missed his mark, and it might have gone hard with the boy but for the timely intervention of the queen-mother. The cup-bearer was now left, so to speak, with but one string to his bow. That night at the banquet the king was summoned to the south to meet the English foe, and set out forthwith, bidding his host follow in the morning with his 'tail.' The earl was on the point of retiring to his room, where the cup-bearer and his friend, the witch, were carefully concealed, when the page, at his wits' end how to avert the dreaded catastrophe, made the brilliant, though somewhat extravagant suggestion, that the palace should be set on fire by way of providing the king with a bonfire or beacon to guide his steps through the darkness. The earl, like a loyal vassal, jumped at the idea, which was promptly put into execution. The cup-bearer perished miserably in the flames; the witch escaped, uttering loud execrations, in a column of smoke; and the page, when St Andrew's day had come and gone, told everything, and was suitably rewarded with an estate and a bride. The last year in which the witch of Ben-y-Gloe is known to have held converse with men was 1773, the very same in which Dr Samuel Johnson safely accomplished his celebrated tour to the Hebrides.

Other witches, though less famous, were often more successful in their predictions or undertakings than she of Ben-y-Gloe in the enterprise just referred to. The mermaid who gave McCombie a warning as to the date of his death proved to be not very wide of the mark; while a couple of witches in the Moulin quarter of the Athole district achieved a most notable if sanguinary performance. Walter Cumyn, so the tale runs, was extremely desirous of making a road between Blair-Athole and Badenoch. Whether his object was to facilitate the importation of a particular sort of malt into his own country for brewing purposes may be doubtful, but certain it is that he had collected a large gang of workmen, and had made considerable progress in the construction of a road. Two witches, to whom these operations were for some reason highly distasteful (they who ride on broomsticks probably need no roads), resolved to put a spoke in his wheel. Assuming the disguise of eagles, they somehow or

other dispersed the 'navvies,' and terrified Cumyn's horse, which took to its heels, the witches in hot pursuit. All of Cumyn that reached home was a single leg in a stirrup; the rest had apparently been accounted for by his implacable pursuers. An element of poetical justice is added to the narrative if we assume, following one version, that the witches were the mothers of two girls whom Cumyn had ordered to reap a field of corn the next day stark naked.

There is a second class of story which is concerned with historical rather than supernatural personages. Fingal and his dog, it is true, scarcely pretend to come within the former category, but the century and a half which have elapsed since the '45 have not sufficed to raise the Young Chevalier to the vague if highly honourable dignity of a sun-myth. We should not, to be sure, care to vouch for every house or cottage in the Highlands which claims that the unhappy prince spent a night beneath its hospitable roof after Culloden. The number of such buildings almost equals that of the 'oldest inhabited houses in Scotland.' But there is no suspicion of doubt about Macpherson's 'Cage' in Ben Alder, which is also memorable as one of the resting-places of that singular pair of fellow-travellers, David Balfour and Alan Breck, who, if we mistake not, were kindly received by, and played cards with, Cluny himself. Nor would it seem as if the sceptical had any reason to disbelieve in Ian-Mohr-Nan-Chastel, who flourished in Glen-Urquhart about the year 1581, and whose celebrated wager about the candlesticks (also ascribed to McDonald of Keppoch) has been turned to such good account by Scott in *The Legend of Montrose*. Such an incident possesses a high degree of picturesqueness, and, therefore, of probability.

A typical illustration of the life of a barbarous age—its numberless vicissitudes, the ceaseless ebb and flow of fortune—is furnished by the feud between Cumyn of Badenoch and the McIntoshes of Tiriue in Glentilt. Cumyn, whose cupidity had been fired by a present of cattle made to his wife by McIntosh, attacked the castle of the latter, and butchered the whole household, with the exception of an infant asleep in its cradle, which escaped the vigilance of the attacking party. The child was taken by an old tenant of McIntosh to be brought up by relatives in Argyllshire, and as he grew up to manhood, became remarkably expert with bow and arrow. The chance remark made one day that 'the gray breast of the man who killed your father is broader than that target,' became the signal for the disclosure of the whole affair, and young McIntosh resolved to be revenged. In due course he attacked Cumyn's stronghold with success, and chased the murderer to Rannoch and thence to Glentilt, where he despatched him with a well-directed shaft beside a small loch near the foot of Ben-y-Gloe. A cairn called Cumyn's is believed to commemorate the event. The same McIntosh, we are told, was in the habit of holding his court enthroned upon a boulder in the middle of the Tilt. This chair, however, was luckily seldom uncovered by the water, for whenever the chief held a court he hanged a man.

A third class of story deals neither with witches nor with persons of importance in their day, but with people in a more obscure walk or

a humbler rank of life than great chieftains—shepherds, poachers, gillies, and other private individuals. This kind of tale frequently contains a strong infusion of humour, and certainly nothing could be better in its way than the story of Peter Robertson or Breck, the then Duke of Athole's forester. To Peter and his two colleagues the duke offered a large reward for the fattest hart they might succeed in shooting as a present for George III. Now Peter, as it happened, had in his eye a certain five-year-old hart which he knew had been captured as a calf, and brought up in domesticity among the sheep and cattle on a farm on Gaick, which was not the duke's property. Ample supplies of oats, peasemeal, and other delicacies had brought the animal to an enormous degree of fatness. Peter set out for Gaick, left his gun and pony at some distance from that place, and on reaching his destination, reeled into the shepherd's cottage as though intoxicated, and sunk upon the bed in a drunken sleep. The two shepherds, spying a whisky bottle in his right-hand pocket, made short work of its contents, which they duly replaced by water, and they treated similarly another whisky bottle which they found in his left-hand pocket. Peter soon awoke from his pretended slumbers, and proposed a dram from his bottle, which the shepherds nervously declined. It was not long before, overcome by the strength of their potations, they fell unaffectedly asleep, and then came Peter's opportunity. He drove the cattle, with the coveted hart among them, towards the place where he had left his gun, and upon arriving there, was able to take a quiet easy shot at the hart, which he proceeded to carry without delay to the castle, thereby securing the promised reward. For such an act of theft its very audacity might serve as an excuse, and deer-stealing was possibly at one time regarded with more toleration than it would be now. But we fancy that the poacher of a by-gone age had some redeeming qualities which his successor of to-day lacks, and that, in particular, he was far more deeply versed in the hunter's craft which elevates his occupation from a purely commercial level almost to respectability, and a knowledge of which Scott attributes in one of his most spirited short pieces to 'Donald Caird.'

Numberless other stories there are, both grave and gay, connected with the deer-forests of Scotland, but our space is exhausted, and we can only refer the reader to the pages of the fascinating Scrope, from whom we ourselves have nothing scrupled to borrow with great freedom. His *Art of Deer-Stalking* is, in truth, one of the best sporting books ever written. Its attractions are manifold. The illustrations are good, though not to be compared in fidelity and grace of reproduction with those in Mr Grimble's work. There is a poem by 'Monk' Lewis, a translation from the Gaelic from 'the celebrated pen of Mr Disraeli, Jun. ;' and above all there is a lively description of a deer-hunt in Jura by Mr Archibald Macneill, who seems to have hit upon a prose style more closely resembling Sir Walter's than that of any writer we have chanced to come across. But the charm of Scrope's book, of which well-nigh sixty years have not impaired the efficacy, consists not in those or other contributions, but in Scrope's own manner of writing, so easy, so conversational, so garrulous, so studded

with stock-quotations from the classics, yet withal so remote from the merely pedantic, so impregnated with the open fresh air of the Highlands and the true delight of the chase. In Mr Scrope's agreeable company we lie down flat on our faces; we crawl for miles through marsh and heather on hands and knees; we lurk behind boulders, we skulk in the shadow of rocks; we wade, bent double, up deep and rapid streams; in short, we endure incredible hardships and discomforts till we come within range of the monarch of the glen. We fire, we slip the dogs, we follow in hot haste, we find the noble creature at bay, we put an end to his existence with a well-aimed bullet, and then we begin it all over again with redoubled zest. Some of our readers may perhaps share with us the heterodox view that a haunch of venison is very like a haunch of white elephant, and that a leg of mutton is infinitely preferable to the flesh of the red deer. But, be that as it may, few we take it will decline to subscribe to the opinion that, eating qualities apart, the stag is a glorious animal to stalk, and an excellent animal to read about in the works of writers such as Mr Scrope or Mr Grimble.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XII.

A COMMISSION of inquiry arrived to examine both Philipof and his fellow-prisoner on the following morning; but as the student took care to repeat his version of the story exactly as he had given it on the previous day, and as Philipof was too proud to speak at all, excepting so far as to reply indignantly to every question that was addressed to him, 'I gave my version to the police yesterday: I am innocent,' the commissioners did not make much progress with their enterprise, and both prisoners remained in their cells. These examinations were constantly repeated, though—to the honour of the Tsar be it said—by special command from 'the highest,' as the Russians style their sovereign, no kind of violence was employed in order to extort the truth from one or the other. Both men were visited by the prison confessor; but he—like the commissioners—utterly failed to persuade either of the prisoners to vary his version of the episode at the Summer Gardens in order that the truth might be arrived at; and so the weeks and then the months passed away, and a year had nearly gone by, and still no progress had been made towards an elucidation of the mystery.

Gradually Philipof's confidence that some one would be found courageous enough and honest enough to come forward as a witness in vindication of his version of the story waned and died, and in its place came a bitter hatred of mankind and a wild desire for revenge against the world in general and the Tsar in particular—these sentiments vying for first place in his heart with the feeling of blank despair which began and ended each hour of his life in the dismal prison-chamber of the fortress. Philipof felt that it would need but a few more weeks or months of this to unhinge his mind altogether. If only they would take him out and hang him, or send him away to Siberia—anything rather than this! He began seriously to consider the advisability of making

a bogus confession in order to bring about some change in his present intolerable existence—whether that change were the scaffold or Siberia did not matter much!

But as it happened, an unexpected event caused a great change in Philipof's affairs before he had made up his mind as to the making of a sham confession, and without the need of any such drastic measures. It was early in April, and Sasha became conscious one morning that a gale from the west was blowing straight up the Neva, which his little window overlooked. He had frequently braved the wrath of his surly-voiced, though not surly-hearted custodian by mounting upon his chair and gazing upon the ice-bound river but a few feet beneath the tiny barred aperture through which he looked out. This was his one recreation, and to watch, far away in the distance, those who crossed the river by the ice-road on foot or in sledges. The warder had caught him thus employed on more occasions than one; but finding that his object was merely the sentimental one of gazing upon his fellow-creatures, and not the dishonest one of attempting escape, the official closed his eyes to the irregularity of the proceeding. On this April morning Philipof looked out and heard the whistling of the wild wind as it rushed shrieking from the Finnish Gulf up the Neva, carrying with it most of what little loose snow was at this late season left upon the ice. He saw also that the ice, thus bared of its covering, looked waterlogged and rotten, and he thought that it would not take much now to move it and set it floating away *en masse* towards the Gulf of Finland, into whose broad bosom the Neva yearly sheds her harvest of icefloes. 'If this wind continues,' he reflected, 'there will be high-water, and that will soon set it floating!'

The wind did continue, and the ice did move, and the water rose rapidly. Philipof watched the scene from his little window and enjoyed it. It was fine to see the great ice-blocks crashing and ploughing through every obstacle, now diving one beneath another, now mounting one upon its fellow and forced onward by the pressure from behind, assuming the most grotesque of attitudes. It is a fine sight to see the Neva ice move!

When the west wind blows hard at St Petersburg the water from the Gulf of Finland is driven back into the Neva, and that fine stream occasionally overflows its banks and floods the town, or those portions of it which lie close to the water's edge. Philipof was not aware that at such times those cells in the fortress-prison which overlooked the river were completely inundated; had he been aware of the fact he would scarcely have watched the progress of the breaking up and floating away of the ice so composedly as he now did. It never occurred to him that things might become unpleasant for himself, until it suddenly struck him that the huge blocks of ice appeared to go whirling past his little window very much nearer its level than the surface of the river was wont to be.

The discovery rather pleased than disconcerted him, for he reflected that if he were to be flooded out of this room he would be taken into another, and any change from the monotony of his little cell, which he had begun to loathe unspeakably long before this, would be an unmingled delight.

When once the Neva waters make up their mind to rise there is no shilly-shallying about the business; they mount 'with a vengeance'; every puff of wind seems to add an inch or two to the depth of the river, and before the city has realised that there is going to be high-water there are pools of a foot in depth along the line of the quays, and the cellars and basements are full of floating furniture and other movable property.

Almost before Philipof had realised that the waters were mounting he became aware of blocks of ice colliding against the bars of his window, and of a small stream trickling in through the broken glass. This soon increased to a steady flow of water, and the floor of the chamber was almost immediately covered. A rat or two and a few mice had already appeared before this, scared from their holes by the influx of water, and had climbed upon the bed for safety. These were friends of Philipof's; he had often fed them with crumbs from his own meals, and he had no objection to affording them the sanctuary they thus claimed.

And now the water began to pour into the room so rapidly that Philipof thought he had better call the attention of his friend the warder; the fellow might be asleep—it was still very early in the morning; and if the water should continue to rise at this rate there would not be too much time to spare, in case of any delay in getting him roused. So Philipof waded through the water, which was knee-deep by this time and horribly cold, and hammered at the door. There was no reply, however; clearly the man was asleep. As a matter of fact, it had been a church holiday the day before, and the fellow had made himself piously drunk, after the manner of his kind. The Russian peasant would sooner perish than work on a church holiday: to do so he would consider a sin of the first magnitude. On the other hand, it is a virtue, in his estimation, to be happy after a bacchanalian fashion, and no harm whatever to drink himself, as I have expressed it, piously drunk. Philipof hammered again, very loudly; for it could not but occur to him how very awkward his position would be if this sleeper were to remain sleeping until the water should have flooded and filled his room to the ceiling. But still there came no answer to his now somewhat frantic battering of the strong iron-studded panels.

Then Philipof felt that he was in a predicament, and reminded himself that he must keep cool. '*Æquam memento*,' he repeated to himself, '*rebus in arduis servare mentem*.' What was best to be done? There were his boots; and he took one off and hammered the door with that; but the clamour of the heel upon the woodwork, though it made noise enough to wake the dead, did not avail to attract the attention of the warder or of any one else; and Philipof put his boot on again, and waded to the window to see whether anything could be done in the way of loosening the bars; perhaps, he thought, the frequent impact of the masses of ice had by this time partially sprung them. The water was now nearly up to his waist, and the rats and mice had been driven from their sanctuary, and were swimming about, trying to climb upon the chair and table which floated hither and thither.

As Philipof, half-swimming now and half-wading in the freezing water, captured his chair and brought it up to the window in order to stand upon it as before and look out, the first thing he saw was a great mass of woodwork bearing down obliquely towards the fortress walls in the midst of ice-blocks; as he instantly perceived, it was the large wooden bridge of the Trinity, which had broken loose from its moorings and was floating away towards the gulf in company with the masses of ice which had effected its release. Almost at the same moment the huge structure came crashing down upon the fortress wall with a sound of rending and crumbling like the roar of a thunderclap that bursts overhead. The fortress, of course, stood firm; but great masses of the woodwork of the bridge tore away, or crumbled to pieces. A corner of it struck the bars of Philipof's window and broke them like twigs, so that all three of them were forced from their fastenings above, and were driven inwards into the room, remaining fixed only at the base, where the masonry was, however, ploughed up and barely held them in place. Instantly Philipof seized one and forced it downwards and out, then the second and the third, and with a sensation of wild delight and thankfulness he realised that—so far as bolts and bars were concerned—he was free to emerge from his prison that instant.

The broken bridge, having collided against the fortress walls, was quickly swept round and away by ice and current, and was now half-a-hundred yards from the point at which it had struck. Philipof climbed upon his window, through which the water was pouring now in a rush like that of a small cataract, and looked out. A huge mass of ice instantly swept him off his feet and dashed him back into the cell, sending him backwards into the water which flooded the apartment.

THE DYAKS OF BORNEO.

WHETHER or not Mr Guy Boothby had in his mind Rajah Brooke of Sarawak when writing the story of 'The Fascination of the King' of the *Medangs* for the delectation of the readers of this *Journal*, the story of Rajah Brooke is a romance in itself. One recalls it in connection with a remarkable and curiously interesting book about the natives of Borneo* by Mr Ling Roth, of which we propose to make some use. These volumes are a mine of wealth for the anthropologist and folklorist, and they are largely based on notes by the late Hugh Brooke Low, himself for many years in the active service of the Rajah of Sarawak. But first let us tell briefly about that benevolent despot.

Borneo is, as everybody knows, an island in the Malay Archipelago, and as everybody does not know, it is equal in size to Germany and Poland together, or say 270,000 square miles. On the north-west coast is situated the Raj of Sarawak, comprising some 50,000 square miles, and at the northern end is the British territory (about 31,000 square miles) at present administered by the British North Borneo Company—one of the chartered companies recently referred to in this

Journal. Sarawak is the oldest settlement, and it was first made known to us by some Bruni traders who brought a few pieces of antimony to Singapore which attracted the attention of some Englishmen there. Then trade sprang up in British hands, but it was soon greatly harassed and hampered by the pirates who were encouraged and supported by the Sultan of Bruni. A young Englishman interested in what he heard of the miseries of the natives under an abominable Sultan, determined to visit the country. This was James Brooke, who at Sarawak found the natives in rebellion against their own ruler, a weak but humane man, the vassal of the Sultan of Bruni. Brooke made peace among the people, obtained a cession of a part of the country, and was appointed or constituted himself in 1841 Rajah of Sarawak, 'and such a Rajah as the world had never seen before nor will again.' He found the Dyaks ground down under the cruellest tyranny, cheated by the Malay traders, and robbed by Malay chiefs, the prey of the neighbouring tribes, who sold their women and children into slavery. Justice was unknown, redress unattainable; Rajah Brooke appeared, and all was changed as by a magician's wand. The pirates were punished, and shut up in their own territories. Equal justice to all races and all men was established. Slavery was stopped, the raids were put an end to, and the Dyaks could sleep in peace, and sow and reap their crops in comfort and security.

It was all the work of one man in an incredibly short space of time; and it is not surprising that the grateful natives came to look upon the stranger who had become their ruler as a superior being, sent specially to confer blessings on the afflicted. They believed he could give them good harvests and make their fruit-trees bear an abundant crop—they were even disposed to attribute to him larger powers. Now Sir James Brooke (for he was knighted by the Queen) held Sarawak not by the sword but solely by the goodwill of the inhabitants, of whom there were two races, one of which, the Mohammedan Malays, looked upon the others—the Dyaks—as savages only fit to be slaves. He had to protect the Dyaks without making enemies of the Malays, and it is a remarkable fact that he won the affection and confidence of both antagonistic races. He ruled the country not for his own good but for the good of the people, and of him we may quote the tribute of Alfred Russel Wallace, no mean authority on anything connected with the Malay Archipelago: 'By those who knew him not he may be sneered at as an enthusiastic adventurer, or abused as a hard-hearted despot, but the universal testimony of every one who came in contact with him in his adopted country, whether European, Malay, or Dyak, will be that Rajah Brooke was a great, a wise, and a good ruler, a true and faithful friend; a man to be admired for his talents, respected for his honesty and courage, and loved for his genuine hospitality, his kindness of disposition, and his tenderness of heart.' Rajah Sir James Brooke went to his rest in 1868, and was succeeded by his nephew, the present Rajah, Sir Charles Brooke.

Now the people whom Rajah Brooke rescued from oppression are the Land Dyaks of Sarawak. The Malay pirates were dispersed, but there were other tribes on the coast and inland whose depre-

* *The Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo*, by Henry Ling Roth. With a Preface by Andrew Lang. (London: Truslove & Hanson; 2 vols.)

dations had to be put a stop to. These were the Sea Dyaks, 'a brave set of robbers,' and the Kayans, 'a robbing set of blusterers.' It has been the work of the present Rajah to complete the suppression of the raids of these tribes. The government of Sarawak is an absolute monarchy, in which the Rajah is assisted by a supreme council of six, composed of two chief European residents and four leading natives; and a general council of fifty, in which are represented the leading European and native residents of all the districts. These districts are for administrative purposes eight in number, and are presided over by European officers, assisted by native officials. The law is 'the law of common-sense based on English law, with a good deal of native and Musulman customs.'

The term Dyak used to be applied by Europeans to all the people of Borneo, but Sir James Brooke said that the name only properly applied to one particular clan on the north-west coast and in the mountains of the interior. He divided these into Sea Dyaks and Land Dyaks, or rather he so designated the two natural divisions of the people. There are also in Borneo, Malays, Kayans, Muruts, Duruns, and other tribes, from whom the Dyaks are quite distinct. The Land Dyaks are small, slightly built, coloured like Malays, and with straight black hair. The Sea Dyaks are more stoutly built, well proportioned, brown skinned, and also with straight black hair. Their language resembles Malay. They believe in dreams, consult birds as omens before engaging in any important undertaking, bury their dead, believe in a vague future state, live in long houses on the river-banks, and tattoo the shoulders and arms. The mental capacity of the Dyaks is rated by Dr A. R. Wallace above the Malays, and in moral character they are undoubtedly superior. 'The worst feature connected with the Dyak character is their temper—they are sulky, obstinate, and sullen when found out or corrected; and they are exceedingly apathetic, nor does there appear any inclination on their part to rise above their low and degraded condition.' As against this, however, we have the testimony of Rajah Brooke that they are a race easily to be modified and improved, especially as they have no prejudices of religion, food, or caste. They are sociable and domestic in their habits, and 'from five to fifty families' will live under one roof without coming to blows. In many cases the women are cleverer than their husbands, and their advice is often followed in serious business. They are hospitable, too, and the wayfarer is presented with the best food the house affords—very 'high' fish or eggs, clean boiled rice, fruit, and areca nuts.

Girls marry for love; they are not sold as among many primitive peoples. All the courting is done by night in the home of the parents, and 'if a girl cares for a man she will let him know; if not, no amount of money can win her.' The method of courtship described in Mr Roth's book reminds one very much of current practices in Lewis and other parts of the Highlands.

A love story is vouched for as authentic which savours of love à la française. 'A young man had proposed to a Dyak girl and was accepted by her, but her parents refused to give their consent, as he was of very inferior birth. Every means

was tried to soften their hearts, but they were obstinate, and endeavoured to induce her to give up her lover and marry another. In their despair the lovers retired to the jungle and swallowed the poisonous juice of the *uba* plant: next morning they were found dead, with their cold and stiff arms entwined round each other. Cases are not of very rare occurrence among the Sakarang Dyaks where disappointed love has sought solace in the grave.' There is a Dyak tradition that in the next world there is a hill covered with poisonous *uba*, beneath the shade of which suicides enjoy undisturbed repose. Here despairing lovers are reunited whose union upon earth was forbidden by harsh and unfeeling parents. And women used to commit suicide to avoid the shame and disgrace of being sold into slavery.

All this implies a belief in the future state. The Dyak, in fact, has many gods for worship, spirits for helpers, omens for guides, sacrifices for propitiation, and ancestral traditions for authority. Their great observance for the dead is the Festival of Departed Spirits. It takes place at irregular intervals, occupies weeks and months of preparation, and severely taxes the resources of the people. But it is necessary, not only as a great social gathering, and to mark the throwing off of mourning, but also as a respectful entertainment of the departed, for whom provision is made as for the living. 'The guests arrive during the day, and the feasting begins in the evening, and lasts all night. An offering of food to the dead is put outside at the entrance of the house. The wailer, of course, is present, and her office now is to invoke the spirit of the winds to invite the dead to come and feast once more with the living; and she goes on to describe in song the whole imaginary circle—the coming of the dead from Hades, the feasting, and the return, &c. The song makes the dead arrive about dawn, and then occurs an action wherein the inter-communication of the dead and living is supposed to be brought to a climax. A certain quantity of *tuak* has been reserved until now in a bamboo, as the peculiar portion of Hades, set apart for a sacred symposium between the dead and the living. It is now drunk by some old man renowned for bravery or riches, or other aged guest who is believed to possess a nature tough enough to encounter the risk of so near a contact with the sharer of death. This "drinking the bamboo," as it is called, is an important part of the festival.'

In most of the Dyak tribes there are several priests, and in some of them half the women are priestesses, whose power consists in their chanting to drive away the spirits. In their 'College of Physicians' there are two classes—the men whose aid is sought in sickness, and the women whose duty is to 'doctor' the paddy with songs. The Dyak theory of sickness is that it is either caused by the presence of evil spirits in the patient's body, or that he has been struck by one of them, or that one of them has enticed his soul out of his body.

The Dyaks (especially the sea tribes) are rich in stories, legends, and fables handed down from generation to generation. Some are in prose, but others are in rhythmical measure and are chanted, and all are unwritten and transmitted orally. Some relate to intrigues and stratagem, others to the histories of Rajahs, and others to mythical

Dyak heroes—the greatest of whom was one Klieng, who did many wonderful things, and married a sort of Dyak Venus.

They are a domestic and sociable people, as we have said, and though the women do most of the hard work, they are not ill-treated. The larger portion of them live in what are called 'long houses,' which seems an eastern form of the flat system, adopted for protective purposes in a land exposed to periodical invasions. One of these houses is 594 feet long, with one front room occupying the entire length of the building. The back part is divided by partitions into the private apartments of the various families, each with a separate door leading from the public apartment. Widows and bachelors occupy the public room, and the 'long house' will altogether accommodate four hundred to five hundred men, women, and children. The whole edifice is erected on a platform a few feet above the ground, approached by a ladder at each end. The platform projects beyond the front of the house, and affords accommodation for the domestic animals as well as for domestic labour. An upper storey is added for stores and implements. Inside, the hollow trunks of trees cut in half serve both as benches and beds. Sometimes villages are intrenched behind strong palisades. The 'long houses' are not all so large as that just described, but the general size will accommodate from fifteen to twenty families. A village may consist of two such houses on posts.

This curious and interesting people have been from time immemorial inveterate 'head-hunters,' and the taste is by no means yet eradicated. In fact, the present Rajah Brooke tells of some of his Dyaks crying to be allowed to go for heads like children crying for sugar-plums. Cannibalism, too, was at one time general among them, although no European has seen any traces of it in recent years. They are keen hunters, but wealth is not so much the accumulation of cash as the possession of gongs, brass guns, and jars, of jugs, fowls, and fruit trees.

THE FURNACEMAN.

CHAPTER II.

THE Heath, even at that early day, had lost much of its original beauty (now a certain portion of it has been converted into a public park, the rest having been absorbed into 'Greater Blacktown'); stagnant pools lay in little hollows here and there; pyramids of furnace slag dotted its surface, with no blade of grass or herb on their black, glassy slopes; the few attenuated cows cropping about dejectedly just imparted the one remaining touch of rusticity.

Still it must be admitted that, a few short hours before Geordie walked across it so determinedly (his heart full of grief, his mind bent on revenge), even Castor Heath was beautiful. The sunlight struck the pieces of slag till they flashed like so many diamonds; the bright beams fell upon each pool and converted it into a dazzling mirror; an early lark poured forth his joyous matins; an early dew had collected in liquid drops on each tuft of heather; and the air was full of the delicate odour of the whin blossoms.

But the morning's early promise had not been

fulfilled. The south wind had called up damp-looking clouds; the horizon was hazy and indistinct; the pools sullen; the slag heaps ugly and coarse. Everything, in fact, about the Heath was in keeping with the features of the solitary figure which strode on towards its north-western extremity: gloomy, forbidding, and repellent.

Geordie's friends hesitated a little before they followed him. They were still somewhat mystified, and needed to ply his landlady and Mrs Perrin with numerous questions before they recognised the full import of his invitation to come and see it.

Then they hesitated no longer. 'It' was likely to prove such a sight as had never been seen in those parts in the memory of the oldest inhabitants (and they were not slow to wrath in Blacktown, at that time), and they wouldn't miss it on any account. Failing a wedding, what could be better than an opportunity of witnessing a bout between the would-be bridegroom and the man who had wronged him?

They hastily called together some dozen or so of the most responsible males who were about the Row at that time of the day, and soon followed Geordie across the Heath.

The group was a somewhat miscellaneous one, and strangely contrasted in detail, both as regards motive and dress. Geordie's friends were attired in full holiday fig, and were bent on seeing fair-play. Others of the men, clad in their usual work-a-day clothes, and black and grimy as to faces and hands, were actuated by a desire to view what promised to be a very sanguinary 'slogging' match. The landlord of the 'Pig and Pipe' was there, making varied bets with the easy nonchalance of one who would pay himself in malt, if not in meal. The old barber, Tarpin, was also among the crowd, perhaps the only one whose motives were entirely disinterested. He was anxious, and afraid that the encounter would lead to far more terrible consequences than any of the lighthearted men around him thought of. He had not scraped men's faces for over fifty years without being able to read their characters somewhat. Lastly, well in the rear, hung half-a-dozen small boys and a couple of small dogs, who were there—well, simply because dogs and small boys cannot keep away whenever mischief is forward. No woman was present, the unwritten law of Milton Row decreeing that on such occasions a woman's room was better than her company.

'Do you think he'll stand to it?' asked a burly smith of the landlord.

'Who? Tim?' queried mine host, as he booked his seventh bet. 'Stand to it? Rather!'

'I misdoubt it,' said a third man, one of the wedding party. 'It'll be strange if Geordie doesn't pound him to a jelly.'

'Tim's tough an' wiry,' objected the landlord, 'an' will stan' up to Geordie. Though, mind you, desiring to ingratiate himself with both factions, for a landlord must not be partial, 'Tim's a miserable kind o' cuss, an' I shouldn't be sorry to see Geordie win.'

The stone house, or, rather, cottage, to which Tim had carried Liz, stood on the edge of a little copse on the far side of the Heath, and Geordie's friends came in sight of him when he was within about a couple of hundred yards from the cottage gate. They hung back a little and let

him enter the garden alone, while they took up a commanding position on the sward in front.

Now Geordie's heart had not grown any softer as he crossed the Heath. Rather was he more determined than ever to be revenged on the man who had wrecked his love and shattered his hope, and as he crunched along the little path leading from the garden gate to the door, he felt fully inclined, if not to 'pound Tim to a jelly,' at least to leave marks upon his body which he would bear with him to the grave.

He had raised his huge foot preparatory to kicking in the door, being fully persuaded that Tim was in the room beyond, when something happened which changed the whole current of his thoughts.

For as he reached the door he heard a light ripple of laughter from behind it, his sweetheart's laugh, which, as it struck upon the ear of this untaught and terribly-wronged man, caused the scales to fall from his eyes and led him to see that he was standing on the threshold of murder.

'Ay! an' worse nor that,' he muttered, for Geordie was not accustomed to make moral comparisons, 'worse nor that. For Liz loves Tim, an' if I smash him I'll be hurtin' her, too, an' that'd be orful. Where should I be then? Liz'd hate me.'

A fierce battle raged beneath the fur waistcoat for about a minute, and then, to the intense astonishment of his friends grouped together beyond the gate, Geordie actually raised his hand and knocked at the door with his knuckles!

The laughter and the voices within ceased, a heavy step trod across the floor, the door was thrown open and revealed Tim Snacker.

'Thoust cum then?' he remarked, taking off his coat without any further preliminary. He had expected the visit, of course, and the group of men outside at once indicated Geordie's intentions.

'Ay, I've cum,' Geordie replied sadly.

'Well, I'm ready for thee,' said Tim, divesting himself of his waistcoat and letting go his braces.

'Nay, Tim, nay,' Geordie began, 'put on thy coat again, lad; I can't fight thee to-day.'

'Fear?' asked Tim, with a sneer.

Geordie's fingers clenched hard and the blood rushed to his face till the veins in his forehead looked like cords.

'Fear?' he shouted. 'Thou knows I be none fear, curse ye for a—,' but there he stopped, gained the mastery over himself once more, and continued in the same quiet tone in which he had begun.

'I can't fight thee, Tim, while her's alive, I can't indeed.'

Tim was nonplussed and puzzled. The man's calm refusal baffled him. He scratched his head in doubt as to what would be expected of him under such extraordinary circumstances. What had Geordie come across the Heath for, and brought his mates with him too, if not to have it out in the regular and recognised fashion?

'I'll fight thee with no end o' pleasure,' he urged, feeling he was playing a very poor part indeed.

'No, Tim, no,' Geordie continued; 'I've said it, and I'll stick to it. Not while her's alive.'

He breathed hard for a few seconds, and then, turning full upon Snacker, while a kind of glow spread over his homely features, urged him to be kind to Liz and treat her well.

'She's worth it, Tim. Mebbe she might have said sooner she would rather have you nor me—but, there, I ought to 'a seen that myself, fool as I was—an' if she's happy with you, Tim, I'll try an' be main glad, an'—an'—'—then with a burst, 'shake hands o'er it, lad.'

And with that the strange fellow put out his hand and Tim, still puzzled, half angry, half ashamed, altogether misdoubting whether he heard and saw aright, took hold of the outstretched hand and shook it, or, rather, let his be shaken by Geordie.

The latter then turned away, passed quickly by the group of astonished men outside, and struck off across the Heath with fierce strides. They would have followed him, but he waved them back with such vehement and unmistakable gestures, that they thought it would be the kindest (and wisest) thing to let him be.

On and on Geordie walked, till the Heath began to slope gradually down to lower grounds, and the heather and whin bushes gave place to close-clipped hedges, trim fields, and country lanes. On and on, by farm and cottage, stream and mill, woods and pastures, till the smoky cloud, ever hanging over Blacktown, had disappeared beyond the hazy horizon; on and on he strode, while the perspiration oozed from every pore, walking as if for a wager, till, from very weariness, he had to rest, and cast himself down on a heap of broken stones lying by the roadside at the summit of a small hill. His fierce and rapid walk, and the many new objects he met with during its progress, had distracted his thoughts somewhat from his bitter trouble. But now that the excitement of motion was passed, it came upon him with redoubled force as he sat upon the heap of stones in that lonely lane. His face was set towards the direction in which Castor Heath lay. He thought it all out, the happiness he had so nearly grasped; the home that might have been so dear; the joyful hard work he had looked forward to; the building of the tiny nest in Milton Row.

He leaned back upon the stones and gazed up into the leaden sky, trying bravely to fight the trouble down.

'It's hard,' he muttered, 'it's terrible hard. An' I loved her true an' fair, an' would 'a loved her true an' fair to the end.'

The south wind had chilled the damp-looking clouds till they began to descend in myriads of tiny refreshing drops, and in a short while the whole country-side was penetrated by the fine rain. But the solitary figure sitting on that stony mound, with bowed head and listless hands, neither noticed nor felt it.

'I loved her fair an' true an' I would 'a loved her fair an' true to the end,' was the refrain of his thoughts. 'But then,' still trying to shield Liz from any blame, 'perhaps it's best as it is. She might have married me first an' hated me after. But it's terrible hard, an' I loved her fair. Lord knows I did.'

As he sat, something cold and damp was pushed against his left hand, and looking down he saw that a wretched little rough-haired terrier pup had crept up to him and was licking his palm. Apparently a serious attempt had been made to despatch puppy to the shadowy land, for one end of a piece of cord was tied tightly round his neck,

while at the other end was a loop highly suggestive of a stone or brickbat.

'Poor beast,' muttered Geordie, as he cut the cord and patted the miserable little brute kindly on the back; but puppy was too exhausted to do anything to show his gratitude just then, beyond a little feeble licking of the hand that had severed the cord, after which he curled himself up close against his rescuer's big legs.

Hour followed hour, till the dim twilight came, and at last Geordie realised that he had still to reach home—what was his home now?—and he was many miles from Castor Heath, in an unknown country, and with night approaching.

How long he had sat by the roadside he never knew, but he reached Milton Row long after midnight, by which time the crimson scarf was a stained rag; the well-polished boots washed white at the toes by the wet grass; and the fur waistcoat a sop of matted hair. And as he had trudged along, the rough-coated terrier pup had trotted close to his heels, followed him upstairs, and slept on the chair by his bed-head.

Geordie's friends were bitterly disappointed, and hurt too, at what they considered his unkind treatment of them. They couldn't understand it. His conduct had been so unlike what he had led them to expect. It was really very shabby treatment indeed, to lure them across the Heath on a hot summer's day, in hope of witnessing a fight, and then turn tail and show the white feather in such an unaccountable manner.

They turned to Tim for an explanation, but that individual could only say, and honestly enough, that he had offered to fight Geordie and the latter had refused. Though when Tim, desirous of placing himself in as favourable a light as possible, threw out a broad hint that Geordie had been afraid, he was pulled up sharply by the others.

'I'll bet he wasn't afraid a haphorth,' said the burly smith before mentioned, 'though I allow there's som'at in this I can't quite make out. But I reckon it wasn't fear as druv' him away in that queer start.'

'Wish he'd stood us treat afore he rushed off,' another man grumblingly remarked.

Here was an opportunity for Tim to turn popular feeling in his favour, and get rid of his unwelcome visitors at the same time, by offering to stand treat that very evening at the 'Pig and Pipe' to all who cared to come. He made the offer, the invitation was eagerly accepted, and by seven o'clock a merry group was assembled in the sheltered and cosy parlour of the 'Pig and Pipe,' drinking at Tim's expense, while the man who ought to have been there was battling with his trouble out on the lonely country-side, drenched and chilled to the bone.

The company gathered so convivially at the 'Pig and Pipe' discussed Geordie freely and openly. His strange conduct had had the effect of alienating public sympathy from him almost entirely. Had he met Tim, fought him like a man and been beaten, he would have been judged with some leniency perhaps. But his late friends, drinking at Tim's expense, were not slow in coming to the conclusion that perhaps, after all, the latter was right in carrying off Liz. It would have been a pity for her to have been wasted on such a man of straw as Donce.

One unanimous conclusion Geordie's friends came to, which was that he was bound to take to drinking. No other course was open to a man after such conduct, following hard upon his throw over by Liz. They prophesied that in a month's time he would be a perfect wreck.

Certainly his immediate conduct seemed likely to fulfil the prophecy. For the landlord of the 'Pig and Pipe' had never had such a constant customer as Geordie became during the next week. Seven days and seven nights passed, during which, with the exception of a few hours each morning, he was never sober. He drank in a determined, dogged, and constant way, that put the habitual toppers of Milton Row altogether in the shade. The prophets reduced their month to a fortnight.

But at the end of that week of semi-forgetfulness and stupor, the man they were watching with such interest came to himself once more. Perhaps he felt that he had now propitiated his friends by showing that if he would not fight he could at least drink. From that time to the day of his death he was never again the worse for liquor.

His sudden reform was a second surprise for his friends. Evidently this was no ordinary man, and must not be measured by every-day standards. Their regard for him began to grow again. A third and greater surprise, however, was in store, not only for them, but for the whole Row; one which caused them to entertain doubts as to Geordie's sanity. For, his debauch over and its effects passed off, the furnaceman went to work again one morning, and returned to his lodgings at the usual time for tea. He sat in the kitchen afterwards and smoked long and thoughtfully, emptying bowl after bowl, till evening approached and the sun had almost disappeared. Then he roused himself, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, put on his greasy cap, and slowly sauntered down the street, with the rough-haired terrier pup at his side.

He stopped at the little cottage he had lately furnished with so much pride and thoughtfulness, took the key from his pocket, unlocked the door, and entered. The door opened directly upon the living room, which was an apartment about three-quarters kitchen and one-quarter parlour. Geordie had not embellished this room with anything like the amount of care he had bestowed on what had been destined for the bridal chamber. It contained little else but a dresser, an arm-chair, and a rocking-chair, both of common wood, and an eight-day clock which stood upon the chimney-piece.

The placing of that rocking-chair had been a matter of great debate with Geordie. If he stood it on the right-hand side of the hearth, then Liz would be in the draught from the door. If he put it on the left side, she would be too far from the window. So he compromised matters by placing both chairs, the one with rockers and the one with arms, opposite the centre of the hearth, and contemplated the arrangement with much satisfaction, as he thought delightedly of the time when he and Liz would sit there together in the long winter evenings. But when his imagination had run riot, and he had pictured a little wooden cradle beside the wooden rocking-chair, then he had had to stamp about the tiled floor of the living room, and slap his huge thigh

with his heavy hand till the room echoed again with the resounding smacks.

'Eh!' he had cried aloud, 'it's fair grand to think of, just fair grand. An' it beats all to fancy how Liz could have taken to a fellow like me. But then she have, and that's enough.'

He thought of all this as he stood within the silent house, and the bitterness of his grief came back to him. He set his face hard, pressed his lips together, and began the work he had come to do.

Having locked the door, he took a hatchet from his coat pocket, a small, sharp, and heavy-headed hatchet, a very effective tool in the hands of a strong man who knew how to use it. Armed with this, he then broke, cut, split, and chopped into pieces the dresser and the chairs, piling the pieces in the centre of the floor. This done, he brought down the chest of drawers from the room above and treated it likewise.

The sound of his labour had penetrated to the adjoining houses, and brought sundry neighbours to the window, who peered in and tried to see what he was doing. But the light was too dim for that, nor did Geordie pay any attention to them, but went on steadily with his chopping.

Having destroyed the chest of drawers, he next brought down the oilcloth 'frocks' from the iron bedstead, gathered a small heap of splinters in the shiny 'frocks,' opened the door and carried the bundle in his arms to the road. Taking no notice of the group of women clustered together outside his door and window, he walked to the middle of the road with his bundle. Placing it on the ground, he opened it slightly, so that the oilcloth was bulged and creased, while the splinters of dry wood lay loose within. He was soon surrounded by a small crowd of women and children, who watched his proceedings with much interest and curiosity.

'Tis a rat,' said one small boy. 'Here, Ned, run for "Tiger." He'll have the life out o' that rat in two shakes.'

'Taint a rat. Are it, Mester Donce?' another asked. 'Besides, look at his own dog.' But the figure crouching over the bundle made no reply, nor did the terrier pup deign to take any notice of the question, but sat with one ear cocked, as much interested as any one in Geordie's proceedings.

Suddenly there was a splutter (and the terrier pup backed, with his tail between his legs), a fizz, a flash of light, and then intense darkness, rendered all the more intense in contrast to the momentary brightness. Geordie's first match having failed him, he struck a second with greater care, shielded it with his hands, and held it to one corner of the oilcloth. A cloud of smoky flame and a crackling of burning chips followed immediately, and the small boys shouted with glee.

Before the chips and cloth had burned themselves out, the silent man had re-entered his house and returned with his arms full of broken table legs, battered ends of drawers, and backs and rungs of chairs. These he heaped upon the little fire, carefully stacking them so that not a particle could escape, and remained on guard till the fierce flames, rushing through the open spaces in the wreckage, had seized on every bit of the dry timber and were roaring up like a furnace into the still summer air.

'A bonfire, horray!' cried the boys, and one

of them ran forward with the full intention of seizing a brand, in order that he might rush down the street, and wave it round his head in fiery circles. But before he could get the brand off—which happened, by the way, to be part of the rocking-chair—he felt a heavy hand laid on his wrist, saw a grim face bending down and heard the words, 'Drop it,' hiss from between Geordie's teeth, as he pushed the lad, terribly frightened, back into the crowd again.

'Come away, Johnnie; what business has thee to go meddling with what doesn't belong to 'ee?' a woman cried, and Johnnie was huffed and cuffed right away to the outer darkness. For the women felt it was wiser to leave Geordie to his own devices. True, such wanton destruction of good furniture was sad to see; but then if a man may not do what he likes with his own, what is he good for, pray?

So they looked on in silence, as this priest of Moloch continued to sacrifice; even when the iron bedstead, bent and twisted beyond recognition, was planted in the middle of the fire and capped with the straw mattress, they made no murmur.

The bright flames lit up the whole length and breadth of Milton Row, making the cottages stand out clear and distinct against the dark sky. Heads were looking out of every window, groups were gathered at every door, as the news spread that Donce had gone 'off his chump,' and was smashing and burning his brand-new furniture.

After the mattress came the ewer and basin, each being held aloft over the altar and shivered to atoms by a blow from the sharp hatchet.

A slight murmur arose from the women-folk at this. True, they would not have put the ewer and basin to their legitimate uses, but the former would have served to carry beer for their lords and masters, and the latter for peeling potatoes and mixing dough.

Again Geordie appeared, this time with the eight-day clock in his hand, destined, with all the rest, to form part of the sacrifice.

'I'll have that at anyrate,' one of the women said, stepping forward.

'Best let be, Mag,' another woman advised, but the first gave no heed.

'Don't go for to break the pretty clock, Geordie,' she said, touching his arm. 'Let me have it; we'll give you full money for it.'

The six-feet-three-and-a-half turned round upon her sharply, and whether it was the flickering light of the fire which had by this exhausted its first fierceness, or the gleam of the bright hatchet in his hand, that gave his face such a sinister and forbidding expression, Mag shrank back as much cowed and abashed as Johnnie had been a short while before. Then a smart crack with the back of the hatchet ended the days of that clock as a going concern, its wreck was cast upon the glowing heap in the middle of the road, and the sacrifice was over.

Every article but two had been passed through the flames. These were the fur waistcoat, destined, in future years, to be so well known in Blacktown; and the picture which had been fastened behind the door of the bridal-chamber.

Geordie would not have been able to give any sufficient reason for retaining the fur waistcoat, but he knew well why he had kept the picture. The latter was a gaudily-coloured representation

of a Man dressed in long garments, with a number of children gathered round him. In the background were a few other men similarly attired, and in front of the picture several women were standing, some with babies in their arms. Among the latter was one who, he thought, bore a strong likeness to Liz. So he kept that picture.

NEW APPLICATIONS OF ELECTRICITY.

WHEN the industrial history of the second half of the century which is just about closing comes to be written, one of its chief features will be the chapters describing the immense development of arts and industries connected with electricity and its applications to the affairs of daily life. As steam and the steam-engine may be said to have played the principal rôle in the industrial developments of the first half of the century, so electricity in its varied applications undoubtedly occupies the foremost place in the half-century that has followed.

Electric telegraphs were first used on land in the year 1847; ocean telegraphy, its mighty offspring, was initiated with the French cable in 1850. These two have in the intervening years so increased and developed that, as Lord Dufferin finely said in a recent speech, the world is now covered with a throbbing network of nerves, and in its social and political aspects has become as sensitive as a living organism.

The application of electricity to lighting purposes—now no longer regarded as a novelty except in country districts—was so recently as 1880 in its experimental stage. The telephonic system, complete now in all the larger towns of our country, is a still more recent growth; and ten years ago a telephone was a scientific curiosity. These three applications of electricity have given rise to manufacturing industries of great importance; and the capital sunk in these, and the number of people engaged in connection with them, is sufficient to cause them to rank with some of the foremost of our older staple industries.

Two other applications of electricity are at present undergoing rapid development in this and other countries; and it is quite possible that these may in a few years equal or perhaps exceed in importance those already named. These comparatively new applications are its use for traction purposes and its use as a source of energy in chemical and metallurgical operations. It is with one of the latter applications that this article will deal—namely, the production of refined copper.

One of the first experiments which the student of electricity is expected to perform on entering a physical laboratory is to pass an electric current through a solution of blue vitriol (copper sulphate). Let us suppose we are performing this experiment. We take a glass jar and fill it with a solution of this blue vitriol in water. We cut two pieces of thin copper-foil of a size suitable for our jar, attach them to the two wires from our battery, or other source of an electric current, and place them about one inch apart in the copper sulphate solution. Unless the current is much too strong, no visible changes will be witnessed for some time; but if we leave our jar with the current passing through it, and return in half-an-hour, we shall find that whilst one of

the pieces of copper-foil has been attacked by the solution and eaten away, the other has been covered with a red deposit of fresh copper.

If we left the jar with the current passing through it for a still longer period, say for a whole day, we should find that this eating away of the one piece of copper and deposition of fresh copper on the other would continue until the first had entirely disappeared. If we had weighed the two pieces of foil before commencing the experiment, we should also be able to prove that practically no copper had been lost; for the remaining piece with its red deposit would weigh nearly as much as the two pieces with which we started. If we now analysed this deposited copper we should find it quite pure, and any impurities it might have contained in its original form would be found as a black or brown sediment at the bottom of our glass jar.

It is not possible within the limits of this article to explain, even briefly, the modern theory of the conduction of an electric current by solutions of salt. The changes that occur are molecular ones, and are, in fact, a splitting up of the molecule of the compound into simple parts. The term used to describe this change—electrolysis (from Greek *ēlektron*, and *lyō*, to loosen)—indicates this.

Faraday discovered in the early years of this century that the amount of chemical change is always proportionate to the quantity of current used. To explain this, he put forward the hypothesis that each atom, or group of atoms, as it passed from one side of the electrolytic cell to the other, carried with it a definite amount of electricity; and that the current, therefore, was carried through such solutions by a continuous drift of numberless units of matter, each charged with its minute, yet fixed, portion of electricity.

The modern theory is merely a modification of this earlier one. If, then, we had possessed eyes capable of penetrating the molecular structure of the clear blue copper solution contained in our glass jar during our supposed experiment, we might expect to have seen a regular and continuous drift of myriads of the most minute particles of copper from the piece which was being dissolved towards the other; and if we had possessed any means of isolating one of these particles, and of testing it, we should have found that it carried a most minute and infinitesimal charge of electricity. Now, when we realise that this transfer of copper from the one piece to the other is taking place atom by atom, and it is calculated that there are sixty thousand million million atoms in one cubic inch of copper, it may seem incredible that this method of producing pure copper should be used on an industrial scale of operations. The electrolytic production of copper, however, not only exists as an industry, but is one that in recent years has attained very great magnitude. The first patent dealing with this method of producing pure copper was taken out by Mr James Elkington in the year 1865. The first electrolytic copper-works were started at Pembrey in South Wales in 1869; and to-day it is estimated that there are about forty of these refineries scattered throughout Europe and America, and that no less than one hundred thousand tons of copper, or over one-fourth of the total copper production of the world, is

passing through them annually. The cause of this great expansion of what was, until 1885, a small and limited industry is the demand for a very pure form of copper for electrical purposes. It is found that some metals conduct electricity with much less heating and loss of current than others. Silver is the best conductor, and copper stands next. The first is of course excluded from general use by its cost, and consequently copper is used for all purposes where electric current has to be conducted with a minimum of loss. It has been discovered, however, that a very small percentage of other metals in copper much reduces its conducting power; and that commercial copper, which contains generally antimony and silver as impurities, is a much worse conductor than pure copper. It is undoubtedly a most remarkable fact that a few atoms of silver or other metal, distributed uniformly throughout a mass containing millions of atoms of copper, should produce any marked alteration in its conducting properties. The fact is, however, beyond dispute, and experts of great ability are even now engaged upon experimental work directed towards its explanation. The copper produced by the electrolytic refining process is remarkably pure, and therefore specially suited to the requirements of electrical work. It is owing to this, and to the fact that the whole of the silver contained as an 'impurity' in this raw copper can be recovered from the sludge which collects at the bottom of the refining vats by a comparatively simple and inexpensive process, that the electrolytic refining process has undergone such extraordinary developments in the period 1885-1896.

The *modus operandi* in these electrolytic copper refineries is only a repetition of the methods of our experiment upon a vastly magnified scale of operations. The impure copper is cast into plates, and these are hung in rows in wooden vats filled with a solution of copper sulphate. Thin plates of pure copper are likewise prepared, and hung in such a way that there is one facing each side of the raw copper plate at a distance of about two inches. The current connections are then made, and care is taken that the direction the current takes between all these plates is from those of raw copper towards those of pure copper. The process is then allowed to continue until the original plates of impure copper are entirely eaten away. The plates of pure copper, now thickly coated with a rough deposit of fresh copper, are taken out of the vats, washed, dried, and melted down into ingot form for sale. The impurities of the raw copper found at the bottom of the vat are carefully collected, and treated by a chemical method in order to extract the silver. Hundreds of these vats must be kept continuously at work in order to produce the pure copper in large quantities, and large steam-engines and dynamos are necessary in order to produce the requisite electric current.

Our own country possesses only four of these electrolytic copper refineries, but in the United States there are at least sixteen, most of which have been erected in recent years. The largest in the world is that at the Anaconda Mine, in the State of Montana, U.S.A. Here engines of 3000 horse-power are used; there are 1200 depositing vats, each capable of holding four tons of copper when charged for working, and 110 tons of pure

copper are turned out daily. The value of the copper contained in the depositing vats alone at this refinery is estimated to be over £200,000, and the value of the 'impurities' of the raw copper (the silver and gold) recovered monthly is between £40,000 and £50,000. This electrolytic copper-refining industry is one which will grow to still larger dimensions in the future. The applications of electricity in the arts and manufactures are increasing yearly, and consequently the demand for pure copper is one that is bound to grow to even larger dimensions than those at present attained.

This industry is a unique one; for though other chemical and metallurgical processes are now worked on an industrial scale in which electricity is the source of energy, yet in this case electricity not only supplies the energy but provides the market for the article produced.

'AN AWFUL FLUKE.'

By Commander E. P. STATHAM, R.N.

A MIGHTY roar from a dense circle of spectators surrounding a closely-cropped green arena, level and smooth as a billiard table, dotted with a dozen or so of figures clad in white flannels.

It is the last day—nay, the last hour—of the first match of the season between the great rival counties of Cottonshire and Woolshire, and the prospect of a close finish has attracted a crowd of some twenty thousand enthusiasts to the well-known Cottonshire ground, one of the finest in England. Woolshire had been left with the formidable task of obtaining two hundred and thirty-five runs, and in spite of the efforts of the crack Cottonshire fast bowler and the wiles of the sly left-hander, they looked like getting it; so, as the telegrams were posted during the day in the great town, train after train discharged its brimming cargo at the cricket-ground station, until every seat was filled, and a thousand or two were standing where they could.

The Woolshire captain, ever staunch at a crisis, had already considerably exceeded his 'century'; and at the moment of our entry the ninth wicket had just fallen for two hundred and twenty; and fallen in a somewhat sensational manner. The other Woolshire batsman had cut the fast bowler well forward, and his captain had called him for a short run. Alas for the rashness of youth! Had he forgotten that there stood there, nearly in the track of the ball as it twisted and circled swiftly over the smooth turf, the redoubtable Tommy Bates, one of the finest cover-points in England? None more skillful than he in judging every manœuvre of a 'curly' stroke; no one more clean and swift in picking up and returning. Quick as a flash he has the ball in his left hand—and a left-handed cover-point, mark you, is a dangerous man any day—and with an almost simultaneous motion has sent it straight at the bowler's wicket. In vain the Woolshire man covers the ground at lightning speed; the ball is there before him; there is a rattle of stumps and a flying of bails, for Tommy has thrown down the wicket.

Fifteen runs wanted for the last wicket, and only twenty-five minutes play! Hence the roar which greeted Tommy Bates's smart performance,

a roar in which the Woolshire men, who were present in large numbers, could not but join, for every lover of cricket and fair-play feels his heart stirred at such a moment. It was as when the brave Horatius swam the Tiber, in the presence of friends and foes :

And when above the surges
They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
Could scarce forbear to cheer.

In the crowded covered stand on the pavilion side there sat a little party of enthusiasts, who had seen every ball bowled in the match. It consisted of one Jack Poole, as he was commonly called by his friends, a keen cricketer in his younger days, but now somewhat prematurely stout, and better at looking on; his young wife, and her younger sister, Muriel Paget, all staunch adherents of Cottonshire; also Reginald Norcock, Jack Poole's intimate friend, though considerably his junior, and a very keen Woolshire man.

Muriel, who understood the game thoroughly, had been on tenterhooks all day as the Woolshire score rose steadily, and Norcock had not found it difficult to 'draw' her, after his mischievous fashion, until she felt 'all over prickles.' And yet he was almost persuaded that he was deeply in love with her, and she was not at all sure that she would not have said 'yes' to him, only there was another man to whom she thought she would just as soon say it, if he gave her the chance, and that was Arthur Trelawney, the young Cottonshire captain, a Cornishman by birth, but Cottonshire by residence, and a cricketer every inch of him. He had placed himself at point, where, in spite of some innate modesty, he knew he was unrivalled, and had won many a round of applause during the day for his smart fielding.

'What a beastly fluke!' exclaimed Norcock, as the Woolshire batsman retired.

'A fluke! what will you say next?' said Muriel. 'He aimed at the wicket, and there wasn't a run there in any case.'

'Not with such awful luck as that; but these Cottonshire fellows have had all the luck to-day.'

'Oh, Mr Norcock! Why, Mr Johnson was missed when he had only made fifty!'

Johnson was the Woolshire captain.

'Oh, I quite admit that the Cottonshire men can't field,' said Norcock; and Muriel only replied by an indignant side-glance, which her companion duly noted, for she was a very pretty girl.

A dead silence reigned as the last man came in, a young professional, more noted for bowling than batting. The captain met him as he approached, and addressed a few earnest words to him.

Slowly the score rose, but the minutes sped quickly as the shadows lengthened on the green-sward. Every hit, every smart piece of fielding, was greeted with ever-increasing enthusiasm. The captain, anxious to atone for his momentary lack of judgment, played with consummate skill, keeping the bowling to himself as far as possible, even at the occasional sacrifice of a run. There was a deafening burst of cheering when he drove a delivery of the fast bowler's right into the circle of spectators, and the score reached two hundred and thirty-three; one to tie, two to win, and only time for two or three more overs.

A great shout went up from all Cottonshire as

Tommy Bates was once more put on, with his shifty left-handers, varying constantly in pace and pitch. The young Woolshire professional faced him, and had all he could do to keep his wicket up for the first three balls. Then came a rather short-pitched one, a little to the off, and he prepared himself for a mighty cut, which should win the match, and cover him with glory. But he had not got to the bottom of Tommy. The ball hung ever so little on the rise, and his stroke was consequently timed too soon. It fell with vigour enough, and took the ball fairly a-slant; but instead of flying low off the bat, clear of point's left hand, and going to the boundary, it rose, at a tremendous pace, shoulder high, and within reach of Trelawney's right hand. He was not the man to shirk a 'hot' one; his hand shot out as he leaned over, and was there as soon as the ball, which, however, struck his thumb-joint, and flew spinning up into the air.

'Well tried! Well tried!' roared the crowd; but before they had the words well out they realised that it was more than a 'try.' Turning on his heel, Trelawney rushed under the ball as it descended well beyond him, and just secured it with his left hand, losing his balance in the effort; he stumbled a few paces, and fell heavily on his right side, rolling over on his back, but holding the ball up in his left hand; and Cottonshire had won!

Never was such a catch, at such a moment! How the people yelled and cheered! They climbed over the railing, and rushing from all sides upon Trelawney and Tommy Bates, carried them to the pavilion.

The Woolshire men, being good sportsmen, as every one knows, said it was the best match and the finest catch they had ever seen; and Cottonshire, not to be outdone in generosity, declared that the Woolshire captain's innings of one hundred and thirty-five not out had never been excelled: and so good-fellowship prevailed, as it should do in all such contests.

Reginald Norcock was no whit behind any other Woolshire man in his sporting proclivities, but he could not resist the chance of another shot at his fair neighbour, as she half-rose in the excitement of the moment, crying: 'He has it! he has it! Oh, well caught, Mr Trelawney!'

Muriel Paget, had she been a Roman lady of old, would have cried 'Habet!' with the best of them; ay, and turned her thumb down, too, perhaps: for there is a merciless strain which crops up at times in gentle women.

'There you are! Won by a fluke!' said Norcock.

'A fluke! You call *that* a fluke!' cried Muriel, turning on him with a flash from her blue eyes. 'I thought Woolshire men had more generosity; but you told me you came here to see Cottonshire beaten; and I'm very glad you're disappointed; you couldn't have caught it yourself!'

'I'm catching it now, it seems to me,' said Norcock, with his provoking smile.

'Serve you right!' said Jack Poole, laughing, as they slowly descended in the throng. 'Muriel is too many guns for you, my boy!'

And so thought Norcock, sitting opposite to her as they drove home.

Arthur Trelawney was a guest that night at Jack Poole's snug house in the suburbs, with his right hand bandaged and somewhat helpless, for

he had not come unscathed out of his last exploit; but little recked he of a dislocated thumb or the loss of a little cuticle when Muriel's bright eyes smiled upon him, and she exclaimed, 'You won the match, Mr Trelawney!'

Norcock and Trelawney were not intimate, but each knew well that he had a rival in the other with regard to Muriel Paget.

Trelawney was extremely chivalrous and generous by nature, and strove to regard the other man with a friendly eye, and to persuade himself that he only wished Muriel to be happy; though he would, of course, prefer that he should be the chosen instrument to that end. Norcock, while he was a gentleman all through, and incapable of an unworthy or underhand action, had a strain of hardness and cynicism—a synonym for selfishness in many instances—together with a Woolshireman's characteristic aversion to being beaten at anything, from cricket to love-making; and his sombre eyes regarded his rival across the dinner-table with a glance which was certainly not friendly. He was quite conscious, too, that he had not improved his chances by his remarks at the cricket match, but he had an inveterate habit of bantering any one who was easily 'drawn'; and then Muriel looked so bewitching in her indignation.

'Here's your health, Trelawney!' said Poole, when the wine was passed round; 'may you live long to catch Woolshire men!'

'Hear, hear!' said Norcock sarcastically, but raising his glass: 'but that's not exactly the whole duty of man.'

'It's a very important one, sometimes,' said Muriel; 'and one can only do one thing at a time, after all.'

'Ah, it's the old story, Miss Paget—*Va victis!*' said Norcock; 'and no one shouts it louder than the women.'

'Oh dear, what a tragedy you are making about a cricket match!' said Mrs Poole. 'One would think the fate of nations depended upon it. I like to watch a good game, and let the best side win.'

'It would puzzle any one to know which was the best side to-day,' said Trelawney, pouring oil on the troubled waters; 'it was anybody's game all through; Johnson was simply splendid.'

Norcock did not, it is to be feared, altogether appreciate this pacificatory effort; but the conversation took another turn, and presently the ladies departed, and strolled into the garden in the warm summer twilight, where they presented such an attractive picture that Poole proposed after a time that they should finish their pipes outside.

'Which of those men are you going to have?' said Mrs Poole to her sister; 'they are both good fellows, and—well I needn't descant on their feelings towards you: they wear their hearts upon their sleeves.'

'Am I necessarily a daw?' said Muriel, temporising; for she was disturbed in her mind.

'Not necessarily,' said Mrs Poole, laughing; 'but you have had a few pecks at each; you can't deceive me, you know; and you'll have to decide soon, depend upon it, for peace and quiet's sake: they'll be having a duel *à la morte!*'

'Oh, don't, Mary!' said Muriel, who had not failed to observe Norcock's preoccupation at dinner; 'they are coming out.'

'Well, now, which am I to take charge of?' said Mrs Poole mischievously.

'Toss up, if you like,' said Muriel recklessly. 'I don't care, I'm sure.'

'What a capital idea! There's just time: here's a coin; heads Woolshire, tails Cottonshire!' and she actually spun it, letting it fall on the grass in front of her. 'There, it's Woolshire.'

Before Muriel could reply the men were within hearing.

'Hullo, Mary, what are you tossing up for?' said Poole—'first innings?'

'I dropped a shilling,' said Mary innocently. 'Jack,' she whispered, taking his arm for a moment, 'you come along with me. Mr Norcock, I promised to show you our tomatoes; come along.'

Norcock muttered a hearty wish with regard to the tomatoes; it was not that they might be eaten, which was their legitimate end. He did not wish to go with his hostess; but pretty little Mrs Poole had, when she chose, 'an eye like Mars to threaten and command,' and when she wanted man, he generally went.

Muriel, finding herself thus summarily appropriated on the spin of a coin, was furious for a moment, until she reflected that it might have been worse; for she was beginning to think that she much preferred Trelawney: nevertheless she surreptitiously stamped on the soft grass as she said to herself that it was 'too bad of Mary'; and so it undoubtedly was.

They followed the others a little way, but Mrs Poole took care to ignore them pointedly, so they were soon practically alone, and, at Trelawney's suggestion, entered a little sort of roofless arbour, enclosed by impenetrable box hedges; and here they seated themselves.

Meanwhile the others walked round towards the greenhouses, some distance away; and on turning the corner of the house found, to their amazement, a light ladder put up against the window-sill of Mrs Poole's bedroom.

'Hullo!' exclaimed Poole; 'dinner-time burglars, by Jove! Call Trelawney, and we'll catch them; you stand by the ladder, while we go and force the door!'

'There he is, Jack!' cried Mrs Poole; and sure enough, there was a man crouching under the bushes. He had in fact just come down when he heard their footsteps approaching, and as it was now nearly dark, he hoped to elude observation.

Directly Mrs Poole spoke he was off like the wind, taking the direction of the box thicket where Muriel and Trelawney were ensconced. Norcock gave chase, but the man was fleet of foot, and he had all his work cut out.

Jack Poole saw it was hopeless for him, but followed as fast as he could, calling for Trelawney to stop the burglar.

Trelawney, on his part, had lost no time in availing himself of his opportunities, and was engaged in an earnest, but it must be confessed, a very one-sided conversation with Muriel, who had not as yet opened her lips. He told a very ancient and oft-repeated tale: that he was not a rich man, that he knew he was not worthy of her, that he loved her with all his heart; and wouldn't she, couldn't she, say she loved him? Couldn't she just look at him, and he would know? and so on.

Muriel apparently couldn't or wouldn't do anything he wanted, but steadily regarded her pretty little shoes peeping out from under her skirt. She was struggling in her heart between a feeling of bitter resentment against her sister's shameless conduct and a sensation of relief that it was this man and not the other who had been so disgracefully paired off with her. Her pride was fast giving way, however, before a very different sentiment, and after a moment or two she was in the act of turning her face to his with the answer he wished for, when she started violently, and exclaimed: 'Jack's calling you!' instinctively edging away from him as she spoke. Simultaneously they heard footsteps approaching at headlong speed, and then again Poole shouting:

'Trelawney! Stop him! Stop him!'

Trelawney, thinking it was some 'fool's game,' as he called it, of the others which had thus interrupted his love-making, was furious; but the next instant a man rushing up, stopped a few yards from the entrance to the arbour, in full view, and turning, presented a revolver at some one who followed.

'Drop that, you scoundrel!' said Norcock.

Instantly appreciating the situation, Trelawney seized with his uninjured hand a pair of gardener's shears which had been left there, and swinging them round, discharged them as well as he could at the head of the desperado.

On the instant the report rang out, and Norcock, who was only a yard or two away, must have been shot, but that the uncouth missile caught the man a heavy blow on the shoulder, spoiling his aim, and causing him to stagger for a moment. He was instantly felled by a blow from Norcock's fist, and the weapon wrested from him.

When Poole hurried up, followed by his wife, they found a melodramatic *tableau vivant*; the burglar lay on his back, with Norcock's big foot on his chest, breathless, silent, his keen eyes still glancing round for some possible means of escape. Trelawney stood over him, and the still smoking pistol lay where Norcock had thrown it; while Muriel, white and terrified, looked on from the gap in the box hedge.

When the police had been found, and the ruffian handed over to them, Norcock turned to Trelawney in the drawing-room and said:

'It seems to me, Trelawney, that I owe you my life; I don't know that it's very much good to me or any one else; but you were confoundedly smart with those shears!' and he stretched out his hand and shook Trelawney's warmly.

'It was an awful fluke!' said Trelawney, laughingly depreciating his action. 'I had to use my left hand, you know; but it seemed the only thing to do.'

'Second fluke you've made to-day,' said the incorrigible Norcock, with a sly glance at Muriel, 'but it's lucky you happened to be in the right place.'

Muriel blushed crimson, and became deeply interested in the pattern of the carpet. Her sister whispered to her:

'That was a fluke, too, if they only'—

'Mary! cried Muriel with flashing eyes, so that all three men turned to look at her; but the women kept their secret, and Trelawney never knew until long after they were married that his getting the desired *tête-à-tête* with Muriel that evening was the biggest fluke of all.

THE DEAD LOVER.

DEAD! And only a week to-day
(The blackbird sang from the hawthorn spray)
We wandered up through the dusky wood,
Till high on the moor above we stood,
And gazed on the goodly lands beneath,
That stretch away from the purple heath
To meet the line of the distant sea—
The goodly lands that belong to me.

Dead! I can see the world's smooth face,
As it follows him to his resting-place;
Can hear each weighty, sententious phrase
In which it measures him out his praise.
'Clever? Some hold the truths he taught
Will leave their mark upon modern thought.'
'Good? Why! yes; he preferred, I'm told,
A poor man's thanks to a rich man's gold.'
Then, dropping the while a pious tear,
'Twill breathe a sigh that is half a sneer—
'The finest fellow that walked this earth;
But then—that ugly stain on his birth!'

Fools! Who heeds such a stain but you?
Far above from the heavenly blue
God flashes a smile of awful scorn
At the pitiful sons of woman born,
Who wrap themselves in their ragged pride,
And turn with insolent lip aside
From the better man whom a mother's shame
Has robbed of his right to an honoured name.

Dead! And he loved me! A week to-day
(The blackbird sang from the hawthorn spray),
As we stood alone in the evening light,
I looked in his eyes, and read aright
Their wistful glance, and my pulses stirred,
Though I knew he never would say a word.
The earth stood still while I tried to speak,
The red blood mounted to flush my cheek;
But pride—though neither of rank nor race—
Drove it back ere it tinged my face;
It checked my pulses, and kept me dumb,
Strangling the words as they strove to come—
That craven pride in the woman's thought—
'I dare not offer the gift unsought.'
So, silent, a little space we stood,
Then turned our steps to the dusky wood;
And still behind me the voice of Fate
Whispered, mocking, 'Too late! too late!'

Too late indeed! In the silent gloom,
The darkened hush of his curtained room,
He sleeps so sound he could never hear
My words, though breathed in his very ear;
He would not stir though I rose and crept
To kneel beside him; no tears I wept,
No kiss I pressed on his quiet brow,
Could tell my lover the secret now.

Dead! And I sit in my state apart,
And curse my cowardly woman's heart.

MARGARET MACDONALD.

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THE MOTHER OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

A GENTLE, kindly lady has passed away somewhat suddenly; and one to whom she was ever most friendly would fain lay a stone on the cairn which will be erected by many in affectionate, sorrowing remembrance of Mrs Stevenson.

Edinburgh in especial mourns her loss. In its immediate neighbourhood she passed her early years, her father, the Rev. Dr Balfour, being minister of the parish of Colinton. 'The Manse' afterwards became what has been truly called 'the much-loved second home of Robert Louis Stevenson in his childhood. It was his holiday-house and his convalescent hospital.' In one of his charming papers in 'Memories and Portraits' he gives us a graphic portrait of his grandfather and his surroundings, in the cherished spot so tenderly imprinted on the tenacious, youthful memory. In Edinburgh Mrs Stevenson spent her happy married life; here her husband died; here she returned from a distant land a widowed mother, mourning over the loss of her only son, to dwell among us for too sadly brief a time, and then to fall asleep.

How vivid is the remembrance of the happy home in Heriot Row!—the kindly, clever head of the house; the bright, pleasant wife and mother; and the fragile, imaginative boy who was afterwards to become so famous. We used to wonder how any two of the three could exist if the third were called away, each seemed so necessary to all!

The death of the husband and father caused the first break in the little circle, and most sincerely was he mourned by the two survivors. In his later years Mr Stevenson had the happiness of seeing his only child honoured and admired in no ordinary degree, although he had not by that time reached the zenith of his fame.

The loving *in memoriam* picture of his father by Robert Louis is to be found in 'Thomas Stevenson,' one of the 'Memories and Portraits,' and the dedication of that volume to his surviving

parent is infinitely touching in its affectionate, simple brevity:

'TO MY MOTHER,
IN THE
NAME OF PAST JOY AND PRESENT SORROW,
I DEDICATE
THESE MEMORIES AND PORTRAITS.'

Some time after the death of her husband, Mrs Stevenson, knowing that her son, although now happily married, needed her as much as she longed for his companionship, left her home here, and bravely went to the distant sunny land where the novelist found he could best enjoy a measure of health. There the presence of the surviving beloved one soothed his mother's sorrow; and her intense interest in all that concerned him, and also in the entirely new phases of life around her, made time pass very pleasantly. When on (we think) two occasions she returned to Edinburgh for a short visit, she delighted all her friends by graphic descriptions, aided by innumerable photographs, of life in Samoa. A third time she joined her son and his household there; but now they were not to be long together. As every one knows, after a few hours of illness, the distinguished novelist breathed his last, and sleeps in a lonely grave far from his native land, far from the spot where both his parents now rest till the great awakening. When his mother returned here she looked so changed and saddened, it seemed as if she never could be her own bright self again. True Christian resignation however, time, and the appreciation in which her lamented son was held, had their healing effect; her wonted cheerfulness gradually reappeared, and she evidently began again to enjoy life.

At first we dreaded the most distant allusion to her loss; but before long found that nothing pleased her more than to speak of Robert Louis and his works. This last winter she seemed specially animated and cheerful. The meeting in the Music Hall (presided over by Lord Rosebery) in connection with the proposed memorial to the

great author was a heartfelt pleasure to her. So crowded was it that with the utmost difficulty his mother effected an entrance, and only by going on the platform, much against her inclination, could she obtain a seat. 'You may believe,' she afterwards wrote, 'I listened with very mingled feelings; but I think the prevailing one was gratitude.'

A daughter of the manse, Mrs Stevenson was always, as was her husband, an attached member of the Church of Scotland and a warm friend to its missions. Kind, thoughtful, generous to a degree, she was ever ready to respond to appeals for aid in any form; and many a charity, public and private, will miss her sympathetic heart and her liberal hand.

Interested in all around her, brightly intelligent, full of anecdote, and with a keen sense of humour, she was a delightful companion; and her pleasant smile, her genial laugh, are good to remember.

The afternoon of Easter eve was the last time we saw her; and little did we think that the parting cheerful 'Good-bye' was 'Farewell' for time.

Now the attached trio are reunited where separation is unknown; and sadly as we all mourn the recent loss, and much as we shall miss our kind friend, we cannot but feel thankful in thinking of their happiness.

Long will the skilful engineer be remembered for his work and for his worth; the fascinating writer will continuously hold his exalted place in the Temple of Fame; and to many, many a one who knew, admired, and loved her, the memory will ever be fresh and green of the mother of Robert Louis Stevenson.

B. B.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XIII.

No whit disconcerted, but drenched from head to foot and very cold, Philipof clambered back to the window and thrust his head and shoulders through. A second mass of ice was in the act of bearing down upon him, and Sasha determined that this time he would be ready for it. As it neared his perilous perch he scrambled out towards it and alighted, to his joy, safely upon its surface. The ice-block sank a little with his weight, for a moment, but quickly recovered its equilibrium and bore him bravely. It was a large piece of some fifteen yards in diameter, and its thickness was at least two feet, so that the weight of Philipof was really insignificant as compared with its carrying capacity, though the rains and suns of spring had rotted and weakened it so that its strength was more apparent than real. In an instant Philipof was twenty yards away from his prison walls—saved, in a moment, from both drowning and captivity; a live man and a free one for the time being, though—it must be confessed—it did not appear probable that he had done much more, so far, than exchange one way of getting drowned for another! But Philipof felt full of fight now. Irreligious and inclined to scoff as he always had been by nature, he could not help at this crisis sending up a muttered prayer for aid; while at the same moment the idea occurred to him that Providence could

hardly have released him from his horrible position within the flooded cell in order to immediately immolate him outside of it. He must surely be destined to escape once more: at all events he was going to try!

The surface of the river was covered, Philipof now saw, with blocks of ice similar in size and shape to that upon which he rode; some were larger, some smaller. There were patches of open water here and there; and boats, small barges, and bits of bath-houses and other waterside buildings, carried away by the ice, dotted here and there the surface of the rapidly moving ice-river. Philipof reflected that if he could somehow get across to the nearest boat or lighter, and climb on board, his position would be, for the time being, assured. He was the more inclined to make an attempt to do this rather than stay where he was and float down stream on his ice-raft, because, standing there, he formed an object of observation to those on shore, who would doubtless follow him up and perhaps attempt to save him, or—if he saved himself—wish to know who he was and how he came to be there; and the result of their curiosity would, he knew, be his eventual return to the cell he had just left, with, very likely, the punishment of the knout for attempted escape. If he could get into a barge and hide himself until the current bore him out of the reach of curious eyes, he might float out of danger first and then begin to think of landing.

There was a small lighter floating down almost in a line with him, but some hundred yards away, and upon this little vessel Philipof fixed his hopes. Very carefully at first, but afterwards more boldly, he proceeded to put his plan into execution. First he jumped lightly from his own block of ice upon the next block which floated along cheek by jowl with that on which he had stood. There was an intervening space of black-looking water about five or six feet across; but this offered no impediment. The block he now alighted upon was considerably smaller than his first raft, and sank beneath his weight until the water was knee-deep, and Philipof felt that the sooner he got safely off it the wiser he should be. But the nearest piece in the direction he was making for was a good twelve feet distant, and that with a take-off from knee-deep water was a big jump to attempt standing. He undertook it, however, header-wise, plunging forward head first and alighting half in water half on ice on his stomach. After this there was an easy progress for at least fifty yards. Then Philipof suddenly stepped upon a block which was so rotten that it broke in half with his weight, and the portion his feet rested upon sloped downwards so rapidly that he slipped backwards into the water and was obliged to swim for it. A large block of ice caught him in the nape of the neck as he swam, and forced him under water, and for a moment or two Philipof thought it was all up with him. At that critical minute, as once before on a critical occasion, pious Olga's appeal to him to think of his patron-saint in moments of danger occurred to his mind, and again he did his best to call upon Alexander Nefsky for aid and intercession on his behalf. Even at that grim instant of deadly peril, Philipof could not help picturing to himself the traditional voyage of the saint upon this very river, seated upon a mill-

stone, and the humorous appropriateness of the picture commended itself to his imagination. Philipof's destiny, however, was not yet accomplished, or perhaps the saint was really, like the patron gods and goddesses of the Homeric heroes, somewhere at hand to help his votary in emergency: in any case Sasha came presently to the surface and struck out with all the little breath that the joint action of cold and a fairly long submergence had left in his body. This time he reached a large and strong piece of ice—so large that it seemed to him when he stood safely upon it that it extended almost up to the lighter towards which he was struggling. How lucky, he reflected, that he had not got under this block instead of the one he had just escaped from; his breath could never have held out until it should have passed over his head, and he would have been drowned to a certainty. As it was, he was in luck at last, for one or two small leaps now brought him in safety to the side of the barge, and the next moment Philipof swung himself over the edge of the craft and stood on the deck, feeling like a pursued criminal who has succeeded in reaching sanctuary. It was terribly cold, however, and—in hopes of finding clothes or blankets, but chiefly because it was necessary to stow himself away out of sight in case of interested spectators on the bridges and along the quays, though it was too early for many people to be about the streets—he quickly sought the tiny recess below which answered the purpose of cabin for the lighterman or men.

And now Philipof found that his run of good-luck was not over even yet. There was a fire lighted in the little cabin, and a pot of buckwheat porridge rested smoking upon it: this was good enough in itself, for he was ravenously hungry as well as chattering with cold, and here was remedy for both evils; but this was not all. On the rude plank berth was stretched a sheepskin *kaftan* such as *moujik*s wear—old and greasy and dirty beyond the dreams of griminess—yet, to one in Philipof's position, the most welcome 'find' he could have made under the circumstances. Evidently the proprietor had been surprised by the flood just as he had risen from his night's repose and made preparations for his breakfast, and had effected his escape as the craft was torn from its moorings, and set floating with the icefloes towards the Finnish Gulf. Philipof 'took the goods the gods provided.' He hung his wet clothes all over the stove to dry; he donned the dirty but delightfully warm sheepskin coat, the fur of which is worn inside, and in his case came next to the skin, and then he ate the porridge—every particle of it, and sighed and wished there were more. Soon after this there came a sudden grinding sound, the lighter seemed to sway and twist, and then came to a sudden stop. Philipof peeped out and found that, by reason of the opposition to its passage offered by the great stone bridge of Nicholas, the ice had blocked and stopped. This often happens during the spring 'moving,' the stoppages sometimes lasting for half an hour, sometimes for several hours, occasionally—if frost supervenes to harden the mass and rivet it together—for a week or more.

On this occasion the block was a tight one, and Philipof found that he was destined to spend the day on board his lighter—no very great hardship,

for the craft was loaded with grain, part of which was buckwheat meal, and there was plenty of wood for fuel. He was well in mid-stream, so that it was extremely unlikely that any one would venture over the dangerous ice in order to call upon him and inquire after his feelings. In order to discount the risk of callers as far as possible, however, Philipof never showed himself on deck, and though—with a fire going—he could not altogether avoid giving some indication of his presence on board—yet he used no more fuel than was already burning, and allowed the fire to burn out as quickly as might be, lest he should attract attention. However, the day passed without incident of any kind; passers-by upon the stone bridge did occasionally group to gaze at the derelict craft and to hope that its crew had escaped in time, but no one attempted to board her in order to find out for himself; and so the evening fell at last, and Philipof stretched himself out upon the sheepskin, and indulged in a few hours of very welcome rest, having first heaped plenty of wood upon the fire in order that his clothes might have every chance of drying before early dawn, at which time he intended to flit.

There was a pretty severe frost during the night, and the wind abated and changed. When Philipof awoke at early morning, and, finding his clothes quite dry, he donned them once more and climbed out upon the surrounding icefloes; he found these so tightly packed and frozen together that he had no difficulty whatever in walking straight across to the shore dry-shod, and landing safely close to the Nicholas Bridge. It was about three in the morning, and he was unobserved in the dim light of the dawning day. At the landing stage a sleepy night-policeman met him and was about to expostulate with him upon the folly of venturing upon the ice in its present dangerous condition, but observing that Philipof, who still wore his old Okhotsk uniform, was an officer—having come to abuse—he remained to salute. The fact that Philipof was still dressed in his uniform, which had not been taken from him at the fortress, rendered his proceedings at this stage very much simpler than they would otherwise have been.

CHAPTER XIV.

During his dreary months of captivity in the fortress, Sasha Philipof had had plenty of time to review the entire question—or questions—of his feelings for Olga, hers for him, Dostoiëf's for his wife, Olga's attitude towards her husband, and of his own duty under the complicated situation superinduced by Dostoiëf's shameful neglect of the unfortunate little woman whom he had wooed and wed under misapprehension. Was Dostoiëf's neglect of her attributable to a consciousness that he had never really gained her affections, which remained constant to her old love? Was Olga still in love with him, Philipof? Or, on the principle that ill-treatment at the hands of a man endears him to the ill-treated one, had Olga's affection for her husband strengthened into a warmer feeling by reason of his neglect of her? The baby's birth would contribute, doubtless, to bring the husband and wife closer together. Lastly, was he himself—Philipof—more in love with Olga to-day than had been the case while he was pledged to marry her and before Dostoiëf

had rendered impossible the performance of that obligation?

To the last question there could be but one reply. He was certainly immeasurably fonder of Olga now than ever before. During his captivity he had longed to see her as he had never longed in the old days of absence in the Crimea or elsewhere. He had felt that, if it were possible, he would gladly marry his little ward now. He had also felt that, if he chose to raise a finger on behalf of his own claims upon her affection, he could command her love at a moment's notice; she had never really loved Dostoiëf, and never could or would. The theory of ill-treatment endearing instead of repelling was nonsense. The child's birth might incline a tender heart like Olga's to feel kindly towards its father; but that was not love—Olga's love was his own: had been, was, and should be; it would depend upon himself whether he should claim his own or leave it to run to waste, a spring of pure and beautiful water that flowed into the sand and was lost.

There was one way in which this spring of pure love might yet be utilised. Sasha Philipof was a man of the highest virtue. He was well aware that Olga, though nominally Dostoiëf's wife, was in heart and soul his own; he knew that, if he chose to do so, he could easily persuade her simplicity into regarding her union with Dostoiëf as unreal, unhallowed by love, and as such wicked and impossible; and that therefore her return to himself, her own lover and betrothed, whom she had deserted in consequence of a mistake, would not only be righteous and just, but her plain and inevitable duty. Yet Philipof never dreamed of such a thing. If he and Olga were to come together, this could only be after Dostoiëf's removal, by death or legal separation. Sasha's sentiments towards the Hussar were at this time of the very bitterest. Dostoiëf had rendered himself obnoxious, first, by marrying Olga; and, secondly, by ill-treating her. Thirdly, he had given deadly affront to Philipof by his conduct in connection with Sasha's arrest and imprisonment. Sasha knew well enough that Dostoiëf might, if he had liked, have procured his immediate release. That he had not done so was a deadly injury, and for this last offence he should answer at the sword's point. It would be difficult, in Philipof's present position, to bring his enemy to book; but to book he should be brought, in due course; and when that happy hour arrived, Dostoiëf should not escape. It should be his business to bring this matter to issue as soon as possible; and, now that he was free, he had the best hopes that all would be well in a short while.

Philipof had taken the precaution to fortify himself with a good breakfast of buckwheat *kasha*, or baked porridge, which is very much to be recommended to those who have not tried it by one who has. It is delicious to the taste and extremely nourishing. Philipof found it so; for thus fortified, he was able to wander about the streets of St Petersburg from four in the morning until eight, at which hour he had promised himself the delight of visiting Olga. He could not very well go earlier than that; even eight was somewhat early for a morning call. To most people inhabiting the city whose streets he now threaded such an occupation as Philipof's present one would have been the

dreariest possible, for Russians hate walking. To Sasha, fresh from his maddening captivity of so many months, that early morning walk through the familiar deserted streets was one long progress of delight. He went on winged feet. He visited every street and byway that he knew; he walked up his own stairs and saw another man's name on the door of his lodging—it was a card nailed on to the panel—and only laughed and wondered what had been done with his things: Olga would be able to tell him, no doubt. He visited the Summer Gardens, the scene of the student's attempt upon the Emperor's life and of his own arrest—and even these painful recollections only for a moment threw a shadow over the bright surface of his content and happiness. He thought of the student and cast his eyes over the intervening area of uneven ice-blocks, wedged together, with here and there a bright pool of water where the rush of the current had resisted the sharp night-frost, to the grim fortress wall beyond, dotted with small barred windows. He saw his own window, and even thought he could make out some one at work mending the bars. Where was the student now, he wondered! Had he been rescued in some providential manner like himself; or had he fallen a victim to that drunken warder, and been miserably drowned, like a rat, in his cell—banging and thundering at the door in despair and anguish!

Philipof shuddered to think what might have been his fate and very likely actually had been that of the student. Then he took a sudden resolution and marched straight off to the Kazan Cathedral in the Nefsky. The old, patriarchal-looking, bearded and grimy caretaker, dressed in semi-ecclesiastical garb, and rubbing his eyes as he stood and looked out upon the day from the small side-door of the church which he had just opened, was surprised to see so early a worshipper, and watched Sasha rather suspiciously as he entered the sacred edifice and knelt before the shrine of St Alexander Nefsky. The tutelary saint of the Neva had done him a good turn yesterday, and Sasha's devotions before his *ikon* this morning were sincere enough; so the old caretaker concluded, for he left him to pray undisturbed, and continued his own occupation of rubbing the dust from his eyes and yawning at the side-door, convinced that the valuable jewels set in the frames of many of the greater *ikons* within the cathedral were safe enough in so far as this devout but shabby officer was concerned.

Philipof left the church greatly pleased with his own conduct. Olga would think a great deal of it, he knew. It would be delightful to be able to tell her, when she suggested a visit to the shrine of his patron (as she certainly would!), that he had been already. How delighted and surprised Olga would be—dear, pious little Olga!

It was nearly eight o'clock now, however, and he might fairly direct his steps towards her home. As Philipof reflected, with mixed feelings of bitterness and satisfaction, there was little fear of encountering Dostoiëf at his own house. He was sure not to be there; which—though all wrong theoretically—was all right practically, for it would not suit Sasha at all to see his enemy, or rather to be seen by him, at present! If Dostoiëf could or would do nothing to save him when arrested, but allowed him to lie and languish for

the best part of a year in the fortress-prison, the probability was that he would get him re-arrested without scruple if he knew that he was at large.

So when, after having rung very modestly at the Dostoief door-bell, Philipof saw, to his relief and delight, that it was old Matrona who opened to him, he placed his finger on his lip to warn her, and whispered:

'Hush, Matrona; don't mention my name—I must not be seen. Is your master at home?'

Poor old Matrona, who had heroically stifled the scream which would have been so great a relief to her emotions upon catching sight of her beloved Sasha, threw herself into his arms without speaking, and blessed him and kissed him, after the manner of old Russian nurses, with many signs of the cross both over him and herself. She had drawn him within the entrance hall and shut the front door behind him.

'Oh no!' she said, 'he needn't fear; her master was not at home—there was no one in the house excepting servants, of course, and the nurse and children.'

'Children?' repeated Sasha; 'is there another then, Matrona?'

'Holy Mother!' cried the old woman, 'and you don't know that—two months ago—the sweetest baby-girl—the exact image of'—The good old nurse burst into a passion of tears.

'Whom?—her mother? Well, Matrona, there's nothing to cry about in that; so much the better. And my Olga, is she up yet?'

Matrona threw up her hands and wept aloud. 'Oh my Sashinka, my poor dove,' she wailed, 'where did they hide you away that you have not heard? Our Olga'—Matrona paused, turning to the *ikon* in the corner and bowing and crossing herself with lamentations and incoherent prayers.

Philipof's heart sank within him; he sat down quickly—was this another calamity to be suddenly faced? Was Olga ill—or worse? He tried to speak, but no words would come. He waited awhile. 'Well, Matrona,' he said at length—and his voice sounded dry and harsh, 'speak! What is it? She is dead! Is that it?'

'Dead—dead, yes, two months dead and in heaven,' sobbed the old nurse. 'She began to pine slowly away from the day he came and told her that you, my poor Sashinka, had done a dreadful deed, and were thrown into prison for ever; and when this second baby came she just saw her, and blessed her sweet little life, and then gave up her own. Our poor darling! it was not that she believed you guilty, for she never did; and she often made me promise, if I ever saw you again, to tell you so. But she could not bear to think of you in prison, and she was never really strong since that first illness, when you were away at the war; she just seemed to fade slowly away, like a flower!'

'And—and her husband?' muttered Sasha hoarsely. He could not bring himself to pronounce Dostoief's name.

'He was not present when she died,' sobbed Matrona; 'but he came afterwards and seemed much moved, more so than one would suppose. He was at the funeral of course, and wept much. But since then we see little of him—once a month he comes to learn that all is well with the children, and I am instructed to report to him every week,

and especially if anything occurs. Oh that our beloved had lived two months longer and seen you—now that your innocence is proved, she'—

'My innocence is not proved, Matrona; I have escaped. I am innocent, of course, but you must say nothing to him about having seen me—not just at present, at all events!'

Matrona crossed herself and prayed audibly in her horror.

'Not a word!' she protested; 'but you will come and see the children sometimes?'

'Is the nurse to be trusted?'

'She is my own niece, Katia; you know her well. She is as devoted to you and yours as I myself!'

Then Philipof paid a visit to his small nephew and niece, as he, being a Russian, would call these little ones, the children of his cousin; and it comforted him to see them and fondle them and to pick out the likeness in tiny Olga to her dead mother. After that he and the old nurse had a quiet talk over the coffee—there is no coffee like that which these old Russian nurses can brew; and Philipof learned that his property had been confiscated and his lodging sealed up until his papers had been examined by the police. As for his money, Matrona knew nothing of it; but her dead mistress had left a packet for him to be given to him in case he ever appeared; there was money in that, Matrona knew, for 'Olyushka' had said so; her dear cousin might need it if he were released from prison some day, she said, and her children would be rich without that. Then Matrona added, blushing and confused, that she and Katia had saved a part of their wages for the same purpose, and produced quite a respectable sum of money thus devotedly collected, which she placed in his hands, together with poor dead Olga's packet.

Philipof's heart grew very soft as the good old nurse unfolded her tale of devotion. There were tears in his eyes as he returned the money to the two women, and kissed them both without speaking. Katia remembered that kiss for many a day. Afterwards he told them that he could not now accept their gift, but promised that if he were ever in real need of funds he would apply to them for a loan.

Olga's packet contained a considerable sum of money however, no less than five hundred roubles. There was also a photograph of herself and a few trinkets which had belonged to her dead mother. With these there was a long and loving letter from Olga, in which she commended her children to his care; assured him of her absolute belief in his innocence; adjured him, as a solemn bequest from a dying woman, never under any circumstances to quarrel with her husband; and said a good deal about Alexander Nefsky and the powers of that saint to protect his special votaries when specially called upon. Philipof read the letter with tears and buttoned it up in his breast-pocket. Then he took leave of the two faithful women, promising to visit them as often as possible, and went away to take the necessary steps for his own safety.

He engaged a modest apartment in a by-street in the Vassiliostrof (Basil Island), purchased plain clothes, and set about to obtain employment. This he eventually found, after much seeking, in the office of an English merchant who, being

in need of a Russian clerk, and feeling interested in the story of Sasha—which was true as far as he told it—engaged him at a moderate salary to write letters in the vernacular to his agents in the interior of the country. Sasha had found it more convenient to seek employment among the members of a foreign community, because there would be fewer inquiries made as to passports and such matters by an English employer—inquiries which would be awkward indeed for him, who did not at present possess one of those important documents.

STRATHSPEY.

By BENJAMIN TAYLOR.

IN all broad Scotland there is no region more inspired with the romance of the past and more instinct with the beauty of the present than that which is collectively, but somewhat vaguely, called Strathspey. Amongst the rivers of the country the Spey itself is the swiftest and second longest—the Tay alone having the superiority in length. But not even the classic Tay can rival the great stream to the north of the Grampians in volume, in forceful flow, in eventful history, and in picturesque environments. Not of Spey can it be said as of Denham's river that it is 'strong without rage, without o'erflowing, full'—for, as a matter of fact, its rage is often fierce, and its course is marked by a long history of inundations. Who has not heard of the great Moray Floods, and who does not know of Sir Thomas Dick Lauder? The tourist in Speyside can no more keep Lauder out of his perspective than Mr Dick could keep King Charles the First out of his memorial. The garrulous Baronet of Relugas is ubiquitous in this region; and, truth to say, we would get on badly without him. In fact, the traveller from Perth to Inverness who rejects the guidance of Sir Thomas Dick Lauder through the Moray Floods, the Highland legends, and the lair of the Wolf of Badenoch, must be accounted lost to the grace of a vanishing art.

Upwards of thirteen hundred square miles of country are drained by this romantic and voluminous stream, we are told. Prodigious! But what 'plain man' or woman (only women are never plain) can mentally or otherwise grasp thirteen hundred square miles of territory? More easy, at any rate, is it to understand the force of the current of this river (which is said to throw more water into the ocean than any other stream in Great Britain) when we learn that it has its source in the Braes of Badenoch, some twelve hundred feet above the sea, and that it drops to sea-level in a course of only about a hundred miles, while constantly fed by impetuous tributaries. To its rapid flow it owes its name—at least according to the respectable Shaw, whose views on Picts and Teutons were hardly orthodox, to say the least. The Spey, he says, 'seemeth to have its name from the Teutonic or Pictish word *Spe* (*Spectrum*) because the rapidity of it raiseth much foam.' If this be not true it is at least sufficiently 'well found' to answer the purpose of all but the hypercritical.

It is a self-contained stream too—much less ambitious in the matter of reputed sources than the classic Nile or even the romantic Tay. As

the worthy but finical McCulloch remarks: 'It is one decided Spey from its very spring, receiving numerous accessions but no rival. Its course is almost everywhere rapid; nor does it show any still water till near the very sea. It is also the wildest and most capricious of our large rivers; the alternations of emptiness and flood being more complete and more sudden than those of any other stream.'

And what a history it has conveyed to the heaving bosom of the northern sea! What tales of love and devotion, of chivalry and treachery, of clan conflicts and of national vicissitude! How its now rushing, now babbling waters

Tell of a time when music's flow,
In bridal bower or birth-day hall,
Hath often changed from mirth to woe,
From joyous dance to vengeful call;

or,

Tell of a time when from their steep,
The mournful bier oft wound its way,
And kindred scarce had time to weep,
When summoned to the bloody fray.

Those who would 'recall the straths of rapid Spey' must travel far in time and space. The river flows, or rather rushes, to the Moray Firth between the northern range of the Grampian chain and the Monadhliadh (or gray) Mountains. Keeping watch and ward over its course are the gigantic peaks of the Cairngorm (or blue) Mountains, and that course is through three counties, which formed the ancient province of Moravia, or Moray. In Ptolemy's map the Spey figures as the Tuessis, discharging into the Tuessis Estuarium, with a Roman town or station called Tuessis near where now stands Castle Grant. After the Romans came the kingdom of the Picts, and then in the ninth century came the union of Picts and Scots, followed by the ascendancy of the Scots and the re-division of Scotland into Highland and Lowland. In the fifteenth century the country of the Spey was divided between the three lordships of Balvany, Badenoch, and Lochaber—the homes and haunts respectively of the Grants and Gordons, the Macphersons, and the Camerons.

Of Lochaber the memories are endless, though it includes some of the dreariest and most barren; as well as some of the most romantic districts of Scotland. Here was killed the last wolf in Britain in 1680, and here was invented the deadly axe which figures so much in Scottish history. It was in Lochaber that some of the most stirring events of the times of the Lord of the Isles occurred; it was in Lochaber that the last stand was made against the troops of Cromwell; and it was in Lochaber that the Young Chevalier made both his entrance and his exit in the fateful '45. And from Lochaber has re-echoed round the world the plaintive melody, which has been well defined as expressive of a breaking heart, and over which so many hearts have throbbled to breaking:

Lochaber no more, to Lochaber no more,
We'll maybe return to Lochaber no more!

But Lochaber is a wide term that brings us to the shores of the Atlantic, whereas our purpose is with the valley of the Spey.

It is said of Badenoch—

The land of the Macphersons
Where Spey's wide waters flow,
In the land where Royal Charlie
Knew his best friend in his woe—

that no district of the Highlands, in proportion to its size, has produced so many distinguished soldiers. Once upon a time all the heads of all the branches of the Macpherson clan gave all their sons to the profession of arms; and within living memory nearly all the farms in Badenoch belonged to or were occupied by retired Macpherson soldiers who had distinguished themselves in the service of their country. But other times other manners; most of these farms are now in the hands of strangers. Perhaps this portion of Speyside is best known to the general reader in connection with the notorious 'Wolf of Badenoch,' of whom Sir Thomas Dick Lauder has told at length. Kingussie, the capital of Badenoch, is well known to all travellers on the Highland Railway as the one place of refreshment between Perth and Inverness. Here the Spey is some eight hundred feet above the level of the sea. Its source is about twenty-six miles from Kingussie, and in its course to the sea, for three centuries (according to Skene), it formed the boundary between 'Scotia,' or Scotland proper, and 'Moravia' or the great province of Moray.

From Kingussie, facing northwards, we descend into the extensive valley intersected by the river Spey—a rich vale through which the stream winds in beautiful curves. Now we enter the shadow of the mighty Ben Muich Dhui and of the shapely cone of Cairngorm, in the crevices of the summits of which the snow forms dazzling white patches even in the hottest summer. Cutting through the ancient forest of Rothiemurchus, we cross the boundary-line between Badenoch and Strathspey, and near Aviemore find the craggy watch-hill of Craigellachie, the southern outpost of the Grant clan, whose northern limit on the Spey, thirty miles away, bears the same name. Hence the famous clan slogan, 'Stand fast, Craigellachie!' Here we are in the very centre of the Grampians; and though within thirty miles of Braemar yet separated from it by mountain-masses of four thousand feet, through which is only one practicable and difficult pass. From Aviemore one may ascend the Cairngorms or explore the forests of Rothiemurchus and Glenmore, while we who seek the Land of the Reel press on through pine-woods to Boat of Garten, from which we view the grand stretch of Strathspey—the beautiful river speeding through a spacious valley fringed by fragrant pine-woods and encircled by the everlasting hills.

Seventy years ago this smiling valley was a desolate waste of waters, such as the sons of Noah saw from the windows of the ark before the waters reeked the mountain tops. The great floods of August 1829 converted the greater portion of Strathspey into an inland sea. Where the Nethy joins the Spey, in the romantic district of Abernethy, the stream rose more than twenty feet above its normal level, and it is said that a fifty-gun frigate might have been sailed from Boat of Balliefurth to Boat of Garten. (The nomenclature of the district, by the way, abounds in 'Boats' and 'Bridges,' as if the minds of the inhabitants

were ever bent on the river and its affluents.) In many places the flood rose so high that when the waters subsided hundreds of sheep were found alive in the topmost branches of the trees.

Nothing, says Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, can equal the sublimity of the scene on the memorable morning in August 1829. 'An entire river poured itself over the rugged and precipitous brow of the hill of Upper Craigellachie, converting its furrowed front into one vast and diversified waterfall. Every object around was veiled in a sort of obscurity, save where occasional glimpses of the lofty Cairngorm burst forth amidst the fury of the tempest, and he reared his proud head as if in mockery above it.' The Spey has always been subject to sudden 'spates,' and within living memory there have been inundations of appalling extent, though none, perhaps, so extensive and disastrous as the great flood of 1829, which Sir Thomas Dick Lauder has commemorated, and of which we are reminded in every stage of our journey on Speyside, by oral and written tradition.

In entering Strathspey, we pass through Kinrara, now the property of the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, where the 'witty Duchess of Gordon' frequently lived and where she lies buried, and where Elizabeth, the last Duchess of Gordon, retired from the world. Gordon Castle, however, is far away at the mouth of our river, and the vast Gordon estates, with all their romantic associations, are now, with the old Scottish title, merged in the properties of the Duke of Richmond, Gordon, and Lennox.

Between Kinrara and the chief Gordon country is the land of the Grants of various ilks:

Come the Grants of Tullochgorum
Wi' their pipers gaun before 'em,
Proud the mothers are that bore 'em,
Fiddle-fa-fum.

Next the Grants of Rothiemurchus,
Every man his sword and durr has,
Every man as proud's a Turk is,
Feedle-deedle-dum—

as Sir Alexander Boswell sang.

That there is a magic in the very name 'Strathspey' is not to be denied. It is not in the Highlander alone the emotions are stirred by the associations which the name awakens, although it may be that none but a Highlander can fully appreciate all the figurative strains of its poetry, or can grow properly enthusiastic over the tales of the conquests of the rival clans. For nowhere in the Highlands has clanship been more distinctively marked, and nowhere has the national music had more powerful effect, whether in the martial pibroch, the lively reel, or the wailing coronach. 'Not a turn of the river,' says good old Dr Longmuir, the historian of this district, 'not a pass in the mountain, or the name of an estate, that does not recall some wild legend of the olden, or some thrilling event of more recent times; not a plain that is not associated with some battle; not a castle that has not stood its siege, or been enveloped in flames; not a dark pool or gloomy loch that has not its tale either of guilt or superstition; not a manse that has not been inhabited by some minister that eminently served his Master; or a "town" that has not been the birthplace of some who have shone either in the

literature, the commerce, or the armies of their country.'

It may be that the frequent stone circles and isolated 'standing stones' do not speak so definitely of Druidical occupation as the guide-books would have us believe; but though we may find some other explanation of their origin, their hoary masses tell us that these straths were peopled in an age that has forgotten to leave its history. That Fingal fought and Ossian sang here who can doubt, when we know that the revealer of the Ossianic poems to a wondering modern world was a Speyside Macpherson? Whether or not Ossian sang here, we are at the birthplace of the famous Reel of Tulloch, and in the land from which emanated the strange, wild music known as the 'Strathspey,' known to and loved by thousands to whom Ossian is only a name. Right in the midst of the strath, and facing the Blue Mountain is Tullochgorum, belonging to a sept of the Clan Grant, with whom tradition has associated the peculiar music named after the district. The Reel of Tulloch, however, is said to have been composed by a Macgregor, who wedded a maid of Tulloch, and had slain a number of her clansmen who opposed the match. The Strathspey reel, again, is said to have been invented by the Cummings of Castle Grant; while the song of Tullochgorum (said rather extravagantly by Burns to be the best Scotch song Scotland ever saw) was written by an Episcopal clergyman, the Rev. John Skinner of Longside, Aberdeenshire, to the old tune composed by the Macgregor for the Maid of Tulloch.

Since before 1890 public attention has been frequently drawn to the falling-off in the rod-fishing on the Spey, and as the result of an inquiry by Mr Henry Ffennell, he condemned the persistent manner in which the nets were worked night and day for nine miles above the mouth of the river, by which means he believed the Duke of Richmond was robbing himself. This goes on from Monday morning till midnight on Friday. The increase of the distilleries making the famed Glenlivet whisky is another factor, for the distillery refuse discharged into the river has increased a hundredfold. Salmon-fry placed in the polluted water taken below certain distilleries all died; in the water taken from above they kept all right. This in not a few cases has led to strained relations and litigation. By passing the refuse from the distilleries into settling ponds before its discharge into the Spey the danger to the fishing has been much mitigated.

THE FURNACEMAN.

CHAPTER III.

THUS it was that Geordie took up the thread of his life again, and followed its leadings, though in a dogged, surly manner that soon won for him the character of being the most cross-grained man anywhere about Castor Heath. But life was never the same again to him, nor had his work that same energetic swing it had had only a few weeks before.

He was still the best puddler Jabez Drew had in his employ, still able to gather on the end of his 'rabble' heavier balls than any other man

could have lifted; but he never again sang at his work; and he changed his erect bearing and square shoulders for a heavy slouching gait, carrying his head so low that his chin almost touched his chest.

So the months crept on to winter, and winter changed to spring, bringing no gleam of hope to Geordie, but rather adding to his bitterness of spirit.

For rumours had reached him that things were not going well with Liz, and he regretted his promise not to chastise Tim while she lived. He heard that Liz was neglected and left alone for days at a time. Nay, she had even been struck—kicked, the rumour said—one night by Tim when he was in liquor. But Geordie could not bring himself to believe that.

It is, perhaps, not difficult to understand how Tim had managed to exercise such influence over Liz. He had put a power over her, as many a man has done with a weak, vain, shallow, and frivolous woman. Tim was high up in the social ladder of Burter's Buildings. His house of furniture, and about ten pounds per annum he received from his father's executors, made it less necessary for him to be in constant employment than the majority of workmen around Castor Heath. He always dressed too in a fashion superior to that of the men he came in contact with, and never failed to drink a glass of wine with mine host of the 'Pig and Pipe' on every alternate Saturday night, after he, in common with all other workers in those parts, had received his bi-monthly wage.

Not that Tim was by any means a favourite. In fact, but for his money, he would have been relegated to a very obscure position in Castor Heath society, being of a mean and villainous type of character. The men could not stand his fine airs and fine clothes; his long, tawny moustaches; the perpetual flower in his button-hole on Sunday; and lastly his scented pocket-handkerchief! This latter offended his companions extremely. They did not use handkerchiefs themselves, and abominated scents.

Naturally enough, perhaps, the clothes and flowers, moustache and perfumes, attracted many among the women, and none more so than Liz. Wherefore, being fickle, inconstant, and slightly—as the Milton Row barber had warned Geordie—she had allowed Tim to put a power over her, and thus ministered to her own undoing.

Having gained his end, having prevailed with Liz and carried off the belle of Burter's Buildings from under the bridegroom's eyes, Tim soon grew tired of his prize. Coldness was followed by harshness; then came neglect, and after that ill-treatment and blows.

Being of a mean and contemptible character, Tim delighted to imagine that in some way he could revenge himself on his former rival by being cruel to Liz. He had never forgiven Geordie for the moral victory he had obtained over him the previous summer, and hoped his

ill-treatment of Liz would drive her to complain to her old lover and thus bring on the fight he had been balked of before. In this, however, he was disappointed. Whoever Liz might confide her woes to, she certainly did not go to Geordie.

Perhaps it was this feeling of disappointment on Tim's part which at last led to a memorable conflict between the two men, and one which brought public opinion entirely round to Geordie's side.

He was sitting one evening, in early spring, in the bar-parlour of the 'Pig and Pipe,' smoking and drinking his customary mug of beer, when the door was suddenly swung heavily open and Tim lurched in, pretty well on in liquor, having, in fact, reached stage number two—the quarrelsome.

'Ullo!' he cried, catching sight of the furnaceman, 'be thou here? I thought thou'd given up drink and all such man-like ways.'

But Geordie made no answer. His mug would be emptied and his pipe finished in a minute or two, and then he would be off. However, Tim had no intention of letting him escape so easily.

'Got married yet?' he asked, with a sneer. 'Chaps,' he added, with a laugh, 'here's a fellow as wants a wife. Can't we fit him?'

'Shut up, Tim!' said one of his friends, who had noticed an ugly look pass over Geordie's face at this brutal speech, as he rose slowly and crossed over to the bar to pay his score.

'Hold yer jab,' hiccuped Tim. 'I do hear,' he added, turning to the man he was baiting, 'as how you've sold all that pretty furniture; or burned it, was it? Pity you didn't send it to Liz an' me.'

But never a word did the furnaceman utter. His breath came quick and short; his hands were clenched deep in his trousers pockets, the veins on his forehead seemed fit to burst, as he moved slowly towards the door leading to the open street, looking neither to right nor left.

Some good-natured fellow would have held Tim back, but he pushed his way out after his enemy. He was exasperated by his cool silence.

'Cum, now,' he said, 'I asked thee to fight me wonst and thee wouldn't. Will thee fight me now?'

No answer from the man walking with slow, heavy tread in the middle of the road.

'Thee won't?' the half-drunken fellow hiccuped, seizing Geordie's arm; 'then take that.'

A smart blow on the cheek sent every particle of blood in Geordie's system first to his heart and then back to his head in one mighty rush. This was too much for human endurance.

'A fight! a fight!' was cried on all sides. Several men went to back Tim, though far the greater number stood by Geordie. He had torn off his coat and waistcoat in a flash and thrown them on the ground.

Suddenly he stopped, as he was rolling up the right sleeve of his shirt. Like oil on troubled waters came the memory of his promise to Liz. The sleeve was slowly unrolled again, the coat and waistcoat picked up and thrown over his arm. Then he turned to the men around him, who stood silent with astonishment.

'Lads,' he said, 'I've taken a blow to-day

without givin' it back again, an' the smart of it will be bitter to me all my life. And I've been blamed for a coward, but I can't fight. Because when Liz'—and he paused as if doubtful for a word—'ay, when Liz married Tim I promised I'd never strike him while her was alive, and I'm not goin' back on it.'

Simple words these, but spoken so earnestly and with such sorrow in their accents that the hearers instinctively felt the victory lay with Geordie. They stood on one side to allow him to pass on his way up the road, still with the coat and waistcoat over his arm. It certainly was a pity such a dirty, miserable chap as Tim should not have had a little of the conceit knocked out of him, but—

'Put Tim in horse-pond,' a voice cried out, and the suggestion was immediately taken up with a laugh. Now, the horse-pond was opposite the door of the 'Pig and Pipe,' and its contents were composed of two-thirds mud and one-third stagnant and foul water.

Tim was forthwith seized, his friends being too few to protect him, and dragged to the edge of the pond. Two men laid hold of his wrists, two his feet, and he was swung from side to side a few times, face downwards; then, with a 'one, two, three, and away,' he was shot out into mid-air, and fell with a monstrous flop, in spread-eagle fashion, right in the centre of the pond.

He emerged, covered with mud and slime, sobered by the cold water, and furious at the laughs and jeers of the crowd on the bank. He spat the foul water from his mouth, and waded to the side, stirring up the stinking mud at the bottom of the pond, while the men above him almost tumbled down with merriment at the success of their joke.

'Want some scent, Tim?' one asked.

'Give him a hankcher,' shouted a second.

'Eh, Tim, those fine clothes of yours look wet.'

The poor draggled wretch struggled up the bank, green mud hanging from shoulders, head, and arms, his legs swathed, from thigh downwards, in oily-looking mud. But his troubles were not yet over.

'Seem to be in want o' a wash, Tim,' some one cried. 'Come, chaps, and put him under pump.'

So Tim was carried, resisting as well as he could, to the trough, standing in the stable-yard of the 'Pig and Pipe,' plunged in, and vigorously pumped upon. Thus, at any rate, he became clean again, but was still not yet out of the wood, or, perhaps one ought to say, out of the water.

The joke was too good to be curtailed. Such an opportunity might never occur again. The men were like schoolboys in mischief. To have such a fine gentleman as Tim Snacker entirely in their hands, to maul and muck at their own sweet will, was the best bit of fun of the season. Their loud laughter echoed and re-echoed around the yard. Those who were not near enough to manipulate the pump-handle, or assist in holding Tim down, stood around on tiptoe trying to get occasional peeps at him.

And it was these, when the victim was at last allowed to scramble out of the trough, dazed and confused with his most unusual experiences, who

hurried him out of the yard and into the open road.

'Roll him in the dust, lads, and dry him a bit,' they cried.

So Tim was rolled over and over in the thick, black, powdery dust, till, after being nearly choked with mud and drowned with water, he was now in some danger of suffocation. Indeed, it is quite possible matters might have gone too far and Tim have met with serious injuries had not a horse and trap, driven rapidly along the road, caused the crowd to divert, and thus gave him an opportunity to make a rush for liberty.

He ran as man surely never ran before or since, hotly pursued by the rough-haired terrier, who sprang up at him, and tore out a great piece from his hinder garments. My faith! what a glorious time this had been to the rough-haired terrier. How he had yap-yap-yapped till he almost cracked his throat, rushing here and there in all directions, getting in the way of the men, tumbling in the trough, blinding himself with dust, till he put the final touch to the ruin of Tim's trousers by tearing off a piece from their very centre.

But as Tim ran, one thought, and one only, filled his mind. He would make Liz pay for this second defeat; he would take a dire vengeance for the ill-treatment he had received.

'Curse her,' he muttered, when he was at a safe distance; 'and curse you,' he cried, turning round to face the crowd, while he shook his fist at them, only to immediately resume his running, as one or two men made a motion as if to give chase. 'Ay, laugh away,' he sneered, as a derisive shout came up the road, 'laugh away. Liz will have marks on her back to show for this to-morrow.'

Poor Geordie! If he could have foreseen the result of his forbearance that evening, would he not have broken ten thousand promises rather than add anything to the sufferings Liz was already enduring?

During all these months he had never once seen Liz. He had been at Burter's Buildings two or three times, but Liz was never there now, and Tim's house was away at the other side of Castor Heath, so that there was little chance of their meeting. But at length he came across her, and in this wise.

He was walking on the heath one evening towards sunset, and had unconsciously taken the path he had followed on his first visit to Tim, when, on approaching a stile leading over a stone wall, he noticed the figure of a woman standing against it. The light was too dim to enable him to see anything of her features or form, so that he was almost within a couple of yards of her before he recognised—Liz!

He stopped and stood by her as stiff as a statue. He could not get over the stile unless she moved, and his dogged nature refused to allow him to turn back. So he gazed with stony face over the heath and away from Liz, while his heart beat like a steam-hammer.

'I saw yer comin', Geordie,' and at the sound of her voice, changed, alas! from the time he heard it last, the strong furnaceman trembled, 'and stayed, for I wanted to speak to yer.'

Poor Liz. If she had sinned she had truly sorrowed. Dark lines of grief were beneath her eyes, and on her brow and cheeks were other

markings not of grief's making. Her eyes had lost that starry brightness Geordie knew so well. Her sprightly figure was bowed with the weight of her breaking heart.

'I wronged yer, Geordie; wronged yer sore,' Liz pleaded; 'an' I want to ask yer forgiveness.'

But Geordie's lips uttered no sound. He held himself as stiffly and as doggedly as before.

'Father an' mother have cast me off, Geordie,' the sad voice continued, 'an' I don't blame them. But I should like to have forgiveness from you.'

No answer, unless the clenched hands laid on top of the stone wall with knotted veins on their backs were an answer. The stony face still looked away across the heath, though the heart beneath it was beating more wildly than ever.

'I know I shan't live through it, Geordie, an' it 'ud comfort me as I lie dyin' to think I'd had just one kind word from you.'

Go on, Liz. Try once again. The big heart is almost melted now. One more effort and the hands upon the wall will unclench, the strong arms fold round you and take you and your shame into their embrace. Forgiveness is yours with one more effort.

But that effort was not made. Liz did not plead a fourth time. She turned and gazed at the figure of the man standing by her, and saw in it nothing but unrelenting justice, untempered with the slightest drop of mercy. What could she know of the tremendous battle going on beneath Geordie's waistcoat?

So, with a heavy, heavy sigh, she lifted her weary limbs over the stile and dragged them to what was called her home.

A week later word was brought to the furnaceman one morning that Liz was very ill, and on the evening of the next day he heard that she was dead; died in child-birth he was told, though most people said from ill-treatment mainly.

At first Geordie would not believe the news. He was shocked, too, that it should come so soon after his meeting with Liz. He had reproached himself bitterly for his hard-hearted pride and obstinacy in not speaking to her that night; and now came tidings of her death.

Finding that the tidings were true and that she was indeed dead, all his old desire to take vengeance on Tim returned. He was freed from his promise now; free to show all the world that he was no coward. Free to punish Tim for every wrong, every insult, every unkindness, every act of cruelty he had inflicted upon the woman he ought to have loved and protected.

To-morrow he would go and have it out with him; and this time nothing should save him, nothing intervene. And with a heart full of thoughts of vengeance he went to rest.

He set off immediately after breakfast for the stone house on the other side of Castor Heath. He did not invite any one to accompany him this time, but started alone, his brows contracted and lips pressed firmly together, determined that the punishment Tim was to receive should be full and complete. He would not smash him or break any bones, but would certainly not stop much short of that.

During the night the wind had risen higher and higher, until by nine o'clock an awful hurricane was blowing, a hurricane remembered for many a long day on the coasts of Britain, and regarded

as more than a nine days' wonder even at such an inland place as Blacktown.

The howling wind tearing across the heath, blowing now in this direction and now in that, seemed a fitting companion to the solitary being walking along towards the north-west extremity of the storm-swept area. Geordie found a keen enjoyment in resisting its force. Now it would blow direct in front of him, and he had to lean forward and bend his knees if he wished to keep his feet at all; then a great blast would strike him in the back and he would run before it, for thus he would reach the stone cottage sooner. Or else, at other times, all around him would be a comparative calm, while over his head he could hear the wind roaring as though wild bulls were fighting in the sky; a moment later and it seemed as if the bulls had fallen in one mass on his head, as the terrific wind descended vertically and almost crushed him to the earth.

Now fighting his way onward—with the rough-haired terrier, looking like an animated bull of ragged worsted, trotting at his heels—now running before the storm, or again pausing to take breath during a temporary lull, he struggled on and in time reached Tim's house, only to find it closed, locked, and empty.

'He's soon put her out of his sight,' Geordie muttered, as he turned away and set off in the direction of the works where Tim was employed, hoping to find him there; 'soon got rid of her,' and he reckoned that as another count in his indictment against Tim.

To do the latter justice, however, he had not been in any unseemly haste over the burial of Liz. Her death had occurred three days before Geordie had even heard that she was ill, so that Tim could not be accused of undue haste, though, no doubt, he had had no great desire to delay matters. Geordie, however, did not know this, and Tim's apparent callousness added fresh fuel to the fires of his anger.

THE CYCLE AND THE TRADE OF THE MIDLANDS.

THE yearly increasing popularity of cycling and the enormous sums of public money which, within the last eighteen months, have been invested in the cycle trade, are circumstances of interest and importance in themselves, and as such have naturally drawn wide attention to the industry—its origin, development, present position, and probable future.

It was in the Midland counties of England where the trade first settled, and there it is centred to-day, though the making of cycles is by no means confined now to that busy hive of industrial activity of which Birmingham is the metropolis. Cycle-manufacture has had a very great influence on the prosperity of the district, and more particularly on Coventry, where it has really metamorphosed many local characteristics and changed the life of the people. The transformation is the greater there, because cycle-building engages a larger proportion of the population than it does at either Birmingham, Wolverhampton, or Nottingham, or indeed any other

town; and, moreover, Coventry being smaller than either Birmingham, Wolverhampton, or Nottingham, it is easier to gauge the alterations that have come with the trade—the benefits and possible drawbacks.

That the industry found its earliest lodgment where it did was, in one way, the purest accident. A sewing-machine traveller was in Paris in 1867, and found the wooden 'bone-shaker' being ridden, and he was offered an order for a large number of machines of similar build if he could get them made in England. He sent to his firm at Coventry, where sewing-machines had lately been constructed as a means of finding employment for citizens almost ruined by the French treaty of 1860. The bicycle was made, and, what was more, improved. It may be said to have come out of the sewing-machine, and the sewing-machine out of the watch—that is, the local watchmakers were found to be particularly adapted for the making of the other machine, and, in turn, for the present popular means of travel. But while the cycle was for a long time exclusively made at Coventry, so soon as steel was used in the construction, and iron felloes for the wheels, other places in the Midlands were bound to play a part in the making. None of the components—a word of quite modern use in relation to this trade—were produced at the place where the complete machine was turned out. Coventry not only improved but built the bicycle; yet the tubing was made at Sheffield, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, and in Sweden. Saddles, bells, spokes, bags, and what not, were manufactured elsewhere, and the wood then used for tyres often came from distant lands. The Midlands outside Coventry got the bulk of this trade, and still retain it; though lately several of the component industries have been planted in what is sometimes called 'Cyclopolis.'

Wolverhampton took up cycle-making at a comparatively early date—the name of the late Mr Daniel Rudge being the best known there—and Mr Thomas Humber, still living, planted a business at Beeston. But Mr Rudge, or at any rate his business, was soon transferred to Coventry. Birmingham also founded a trade, and cycle-making shops sprang up at the same time in many other parts of England too. Still the fact remains that the Midland counties can lay claim—and no doubt the claim is indisputable—to doing the bulk of the business; and the Birmingham market has six times the transactions in cycle-shares of all the other stock exchanges put together.

If we leave out the Midlands capital and the Black Country capital, it is the fact that the cycle trade has introduced many new elements into the towns whither it has gone. In the first place, it has earned much additional wealth; but this chiefly in later years, for in the early days immense sums of money were lost in vain endeavours to found businesses. Still, the employees benefited when employers were ruined, or nearly so. But it must not be supposed that all the

people who embarked money in cycles became financial wrecks. Very far from that has been the case. There are not a few men who went from distant homes to start in this trade as mechanics or general managers who are to-day very wealthy; the former have done best. Indeed, it is one of the striking features of the industry—and this should be an encouragement to working men—that until very recently the profits have gone almost entirely into the pockets of those who themselves worked at the bench with turned-up shirt-sleeves and in aprons. Industrious and clever artisans found persons with money ready to combine with them in the establishment and maintenance of cycle-works.

The standard of wealth has been everywhere raised in the last quarter of a century. Time was when men with £10,000 or £15,000 saved were content to either retire from business altogether or at any rate give up the active pursuit to others; but so large have been many of the fortunes made in commercial life of late years, that people have not been content to leave off work until in possession of an amount of wealth which was beyond the dreams of their fathers. The cycle trade has produced its capitalists who, so far as money is able to do it, put into the shade many men hitherto deemed well-off. When one hears of a manufacturer building and furnishing a mansion at a cost of £80,000, of another selling his factory and goodwill for over half-a-million of money, and of scores of others also in opulence, little wonder that ordinary fortunes seem puny in comparison and their possessors of little account in the social scale.

We have shown that people having no original or necessary connection with the making of vehicles have had a share of the earnings from cycle-making. To thousands of them it has been a good share in the sense that they have earned better wages in this way than they were likely to earn in other callings. For the most part these machinists, as they are called, were not skilled workmen when they entered on the business. Often as not they have done some work in an iron-foundry, or they have gone into the towns from the agricultural districts. They at once make fourpence-halfpenny per hour, and very soon rise to sixpence and sevenpence. The skilled men in the recent 'boom' times got week by week from fifty shillings to four pounds; and when they were piece-hands, with others under them, it was not at all uncommon for a cycle-builder to earn five and six pounds. A boy of tender years, who has just passed the necessary standard in an elementary school, starts work at ten shillings, and by eighteen years of age he will be getting his twenty-five to thirty shillings weekly. So the workers have been helped considerably, and the wise among them are permanently better off.

Girls and young ladies have gone very largely into the cycle trade. The rougher work is that of packing and painting, the lighter is of a clerical character. The daily correspondence in all cycle-factories is very great and almost invariably the letters are typewritten. The wages paid to shorthand clerks and typists are considered good—from twenty to thirty shillings, while some young ladies in responsible positions earn more. The hours of business are about seven and a half

per day, and half-a-day off on Saturday, with the usual, or more than the usual, holidays.

Where, as at Coventry, Redditch, and Long Eaton, the cycle people form a large proportion of the total population, the general trade of these places has immensely benefited by the coming of the cycle, and by the increased popularity of the pastime belonging to it. The industry has been the commercial salvation of Coventry; the population steadily increases, and since the last census it has added one thousand persons each year. The building trade has long been brisk, and bricklayers, carpenters, plumbers, paperhangers, &c., have had the advantage of an increase in wages. All departments of local life have been put under pressure. In Birmingham, too, many large new factories are erected solely for this trade. The brokers' offices were for months almost entirely employed in cycle-share transactions. The tube-makers of the Black Country do well. The whole of the industrial Midlands has, indeed, found increased wealth by the expansion of the cycle trade.

Nothing has hitherto been said about cycling itself—the use of the machine which some one has alleged the prophet Isaiah must have had a vision of when he saw one wheel with one cherub, and another wheel with another cherub—because the recreation belongs to everywhere now. But, perhaps, there is more riding in the Midlands than elsewhere; people there are so much brought into contact with the machine, and the highways have always been kept up to a high standard of efficiency. An official police report once made to the Home Office declared that 'everybody in Coventry rides,' and really it would seem that more do so there than elsewhere. The usefulness of the cycle is now beyond dispute. It was of service in the Transvaal 'revolution,' and it goes to hounds and weddings in the Midlands. Not unfrequently it beats the trains in speed. Sometimes accidents are caused by it, but these are incidental to all means of locomotion.

The cycle trade, with its £30,000,000 of capital invested, and its employment of 40,000 hands, has thus done a good deal. Wealth has been made in piles, and all classes engaged in the work are, or might be, considerably better off in consequence. The cycle-worker is of a type distinct from the native in several of the places he has invaded; he often lacks desirable characteristics which belong to the men of the older crafts, and many of the principals lack the refinements of the London and Liverpool commercial potentates. But we must make the best of the world as we find it, and maybe presently, as cycle-making becomes more of a settled and less of a spasmodic occupation than it has been, the race which carries on this immense trade will have other tastes and a larger sense of citizenship. We can never forget that, after all, they have done a great work. He is a benefactor who makes two blades of grass to grow where only one grew before: then, too, must they be good geniuses who plant and carry out an industry that employs many thousands of people and causes wealth to be distributed in millions of pounds yearly. They have given the world a new pastime and the country districts fresh life.

In *Chambers's Journal*, as long ago as 1882, we

find the following: 'With such a machine as the electric tricycle, we can foresee the day when the old Red Lion and the Blue Boar, deserted these last forty years, will again become gay and busy.' The bicycle has done that now, at least in the Midlands, and the electric car, motor-car, and motor-cycle promise to carry still more interest to the rural districts by enabling people to live out of the din and smoke of the factory.

A CARINTHIAN TRAGEDY.

By the BARONESS VON GILSA.

'BROTHER JOHN!' said the Abbot, 'I am grieved, sorely grieved, to hear this of thee. I hoped my oft-repeated admonitions would have borne better fruit.'

The person to whom he spoke was a man of forbidding aspect, whose cunning eyes, peering from under their shaggy brows, glanced restlessly from face to face of those around him, seeking some escape from conviction, but manifesting no sign of penitence.

'I would fain admonish thee once more in private, my son,' pursued the Abbot gently, 'and bid thee by daily prayer and penance to wrestle with the evil spirit that leadeth thee astray—but alas! thou hast transgressed so often!'

'It is a grievous fault, father!' put in the superior, an energetic young monk with stern, compressed lips, who stood scanning with keen eyes the face of the culprit; 'moreover, the transgression hath been an open one, and cannot be atoned by private penance; it is known to many of the community, and there are young brethren among us'—

'True!' said the Abbot sadly. 'I must think of my duty to others, and the matter is clear, beyond all doubt; and yet it grieves me sorely. We must lay it before the Chapter to-morrow.'

The culprit was led out in sullen silence, the sub-prior bringing up the rear, after receiving the directions of his superior for the formal trial on the following day.

'A severe punishment and public rebuke may lead him back into the right path at last,' murmured the Abbot to himself as he paced slowly up and down. 'I would it were possible to cure sin by gentle means. Woe is me that I must wield the stern arm of justice!'

The cloud was still heavy on the old man's brow as he climbed a long stone staircase which led to a large bright room, the scriptorium of the monastery. It was usually filled with busy transcribers, for the library had been celebrated for generations; now, however, it had but one occupant; an elderly man, clad in the brown robe of the order, sat at a table drawn close to one of the windows; his head was bent over the vellum on which with slow and careful hand he was transcribing a precious manuscript, and so absorbed was he in his task that he never noticed

the Abbot's entrance till the latter sat down beside him.

'I have been sorely troubled, Brother Anthony,' said the superior. 'John the cook has been found at his old practices, seen by several of the brethren, and brought to me for public censure.'

The scribe looked up at the sad face beside him.

'That man mistook his vocation when he joined us; there will be neither peace nor order among us while he remains. It is well perhaps that he has broken the rule openly and must be judged by the Chapter.'

'Perhaps,' rejoined the other thoughtfully; 'we must not question the leadings of Providence. Yet I would it had not fallen to me to pronounce sentence on an erring brother!'

'My work is done for to-day,' said the scribe, after a short pause. Wiping and replacing his pen with solemn care, he turned back a page or two till he came to his last initial letter, and laid it before his friend as if to divert his thoughts to a more pleasant subject. It was a gem of missal-painting, and represented in its small compass a bird sitting on its nest among tall rushes, the little head turned sharply to one side, and the watchful eyes directed towards a corner where a child's hand was parting the reeds, and two little flaxen heads were pressed close together gazing at the creature; there was a stretch of calm water beyond, and a low range of green hills sloped gently from the farther bank. The Abbot uttered an exclamation of delighted surprise.

'How well I remember that evening!' he cried. 'It was you who discovered the nest and brought me to look at it on our way home.'

'And you who saved me from slipping into the water in my heedlessness,' said the scribe; 'yours was ever the guiding hand.'

'I remember too,' continued the Abbot, 'how your good father chid us for staying out so late, and meant to chastise us; but the Miller's Andreas came running in with the news that the fever had left his little sister, and the good man put up the rod, saying there should be no tears shed on the day on which God had restored a neighbour's child to life. Many a long year has passed, Brother Anthony, since then, since thou and I looked at that nest by the stream.'

'Five and forty years,' sighed the other, 'and all are gone now save you and I, who have been friends and brothers through all.'

'Friends till death,' said the Abbot, and the two old men joined hands and sat in silence for a while.

'The world was brighter then than it has ever been since,' he said presently, as if thinking aloud.

'But not so bright as it will be,' said Anthony, gazing through the western window. The gables and walls of the old town were dark, and a dim veil was creeping up the slopes and hollows on the hillsides; but the rocky peaks of the Dobratsch stood out sharp and clear against the sky, flushed with the sunset glory which melted softly away through shades of paling gold till it met the gray shadowy twilight.

'It shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light,' said the Abbot.

Just then the bell rang in the refectory, and

hand in hand the two old men went down the stairs.

'The pottage methinks has a bitter taste this evening,' said the Abbot, pushing away his unfinished meal, and leaning back wearily in his chair.

No one else seemed to find fault with the fare, but the ever-watchful sub-prior motioned to one of the novices to remove the dish in front of the superior, and whispered to him to place it carefully in his cell. Later, it was remembered that the Abbot sat, absorbed and careworn, resting his head on his hand, and that at evensong his voice faltered strangely, and his face was deadly pale. But all knew that he was sad at heart on account of the scandal in the monastery, and none gave heed to these symptoms, till at dead of night the whole community was aroused by the tidings that their superior had been seized with mortal pain, and every moment threatened to be his last. Dark suspicions were hinted against the culprit, who had been allowed to complete his labours in the kitchen that night before being removed to the cell where he was to await the morrow's trial. The corridors were thronged by agitated groups listening for fresh reports from the sick-room. Towards morning suspicion swelled to certainty; a dog which had eaten the remainder of the Abbot's supper lay dead in his kennel with unmistakable signs of mortal poison; the lay-brother who stood sentinel at the door of Brother John's cell had noticed a gleam of unchristian joy on his evil countenance when he heard of the Abbot's sickness. Another day found the sufferer weak and sorely spent, yet seeming likely to struggle back to life. The meeting of the Chapter, delayed by this untoward event, now assumed larger dimensions. The Bishop of Villach and the heads of all neighbouring monasteries were summoned to attend the solemn ceremony. It was no longer a question of convent discipline, but a matter of life and death.

The trial was a short one; many an evil deed and word were remembered against the accused, and not one voice bore testimony in his favour. He stood before them, stubborn, stolid, the personification of dogged impenitence, never even attempting to contradict his accusers. The case, bad as it was, was simple enough, the sentence unanimous: 'Let the culprit be walled-up forthwith in the deepest vault of the monastery, and let the record of his crime be buried with him.' At that awful moment one of the monks rose from his seat. It was Brother Anthony, pale and weary with long watching by the bed of his friend. In the name of the good Abbot, whose feet were still trembling on the brink of the unknown world, he pleaded for a more lenient sentence, for one more chance of penitence. The criminal's face changed, and his eyes glanced eagerly towards the speaker. But the Bishop, in measured tones, replied: 'This has been the sin of the parricide; he must share the parricide's doom,' and every voice but one murmured its assent. A sheet of parchment lay on the table, on which a scribe had written in Latin the minutes of the trial; to this the judges affixed their signatures, and left it to be laid at the feet of the wretched man when the sentence was

carried into execution. Then, in slow and solemn procession, they passed from the chapter-house. One loud, wild cry rang through the corridors, and the pale monks crossed themselves, repeating, 'Libera nos a malo.'

That evening the bell of St Blasius tolled long and loud, and a funeral mass was chanted in the lighted chapel. And then all was still. But the sentinels on the walls of the distant town noticed one lamp burning till dawn again brightened over the world. It was in the Abbot's chamber, where two gray-haired men prayed fervently for mercy to a parting soul.

It was a glorious summer morning in the year of grace 1852. A faint mist partially veiled the summit of the Dobratsch, hiding tenderly the rifts and scars in its abrupt sides; the peaks of the great Alps rose a snowy line against the deep blue sky. Birds sang in the woods, and swallows darted merrily across the clear still waters of the lake and round the old mud castle on its northern bank. The sun gleamed on the cross which crowned the tall tower of the church, and stole in through the high windows, lighting up the gilded altars and the huge tombs of departed Kevenhillers. Two young gentlemen left the town of Villach, walking with the brisk step that characterises the Briton all the world over, and makes foreigners declare that the sons of Albion make even recreation a matter of business. They were going to explore the ruins of the great Abbey of St Blasius, and, by a détour to reach the little town of Velden in time to catch the steamer which was to take them down the lake.

'That was a gruesome story the landlord told us last night,' said the younger one. 'One reads of such things, but never expects to find traces of them in real life. Only fancy,' he went on, as they paused amid heaps of dust and rubbish, where here and there a fragment of carved stone showed that something better than a common dwelling-house had once stood there, 'perhaps just under our feet a human being was walled up in this little hole, and left to die by inches while his murderers feasted above him!'

'I wonder what his crime was?' said the other.

'Crime? Perhaps he knew too many secrets, and they put him out of the way. Perhaps he was a Reformer, and they feared his eloquence. Perhaps'—

'Perhaps he was a great rascal, and deserved his fate, horrible as it was,' interrupted his friend. 'Why are you always so hard on those monks of old?'

'And why are you always so ready to speak up for them?' was the retort.

'When I remember the books these old fellows saved for us in the dark ages I feel sure that there were more than ten righteous men in the city, let others say what they will.'

A party of noisy urchins were playing at a short distance among the ruins; one heap, larger than the others, was an imaginary castle, which they were besieging and defending by turns. Two sunburnt, ragged boys drew near to the speaker, each shyly nudging the other and trying to push him forward as spokesman.

'What do you want, my little fellow?' he asked good-naturedly.

'Please, sir, have you a knife? Will you cut this for me?' said the bigger of the two, holding out a large discoloured flap of something which looked like neither rag nor paper. The young man took out his knife, but he had no sooner touched the thing than he uttered an exclamation of surprise, and examined it carefully.

'Where did you find this, my boy?'

'Down there, sir, in the rubbish. It was blowing about, and Franz caught it and said it would make a famous flag if we tore a hole in one corner to put the string through, but none of us could tear it, though we tried very hard.'

The traveller put his knife in his pocket, and took out his purse instead. 'Look here, boys,' he said, dropping some zwanzigers into the hard brown palm, 'go and buy yourselves a real flag, and leave this with me.'

The urchins rushed off in wild delight.

'What treasure have you picked up?' asked his friend.

'A message from the dead,' was the reply; 'let us sit down in a quiet place, and make it out carefully.'

The little steamer started that morning without the travellers, who sat for hours on a stone bench deciphering the faded characters on the large yellow parchment. This was what they read:

'In the year of our Lord 1498, Gishbert of Hohenembs being Bishop of Villach, and Sebalus Abbot of the Monastery of St Blasius, Brother John, cook in the said monastery, being summoned before the Chapter to answer to repeated and scandalous breaches of discipline, did, the night before his trial, mix poison with the pottage of the reverend father who now lieth at the point of death, in grievous bodily torment. The murderer, being tried in solemn conclave by the Bishop of Villach and the heads of seven adjacent monasteries, was by them condemned to be walled-up alive in the right-hand corner of the great western dungeon, a copy of the sentence, signed by all the judges, being placed at his feet. Which just and righteous judgment was duly executed on the night of the 14th November A.D. 1498.'

FISH AND FISHING IN AUSTRALIA.

THOSE who enjoy a fish-breakfast in the old country, and those who esteem fish mostly for 'the catching' they afford, can have little conception of the quantities of fish that abound round the Australian coasts. We must admit that neither salmon nor trout fishing exists anywhere in Greater Britain; neither does any equivalent to the sport with rod and line offer itself to Piscator. The fish in Australia are of a different order. The sport is of another cast. Notwithstanding the immense number of sharks that must be fed, the open sea teems with fish. Every creek, bay, river, lake, and lagoon seems actually to be alive with fish, which, although differing much from those species with which the good people at home are familiar, afford splendid sport and excellent eating at its conclusion. The national sport of Australia, like the national sport of England, is undoubtedly cricket, and after that again—cricket. Still fishing has some claim to be

considered the favourite pastime of all those who live on the coasts of the Pacific; and amongst the expert anglers of New South Wales at all events ladies are happily admitted.

Many of the fish caught in Australian waters bear considerable resemblance to those with which home fish-eaters are familiar. The early settler when he caught a fish called it after that which he considered it most closely resembled. Alas! many of them, beyond the appearance, have but little of the flavour of the home article. The salmon of Europe has a representative in Australia, masquerading under his appearance and even adopting his name. But what a difference—*quantum mutatus ab illo!* The Australian article is flabby and insipid. He is a sorry pretender to the throne of the king of river-fishes. The trout or sea-trout is also an imitation which might well be labelled as being 'made in Germany.' The cod and rock-cod are good eating, but not equal to the originals. The mackerel is but a mackerel in name. As for herrings, we are told that immense shoals of these fish visit our coasts annually, but so far no means have been adopted to take them in.

The balance, however, does not lie wholly against us. There is a fish known as the Murray cod very similar in appearance, and with very much of the flavour and the flakiness of its northern congener. Being a native of the Antipodes, it is bound to be a little irregular—*outré* would be a better word. The irregularity of the Murray cod is that it is absolutely a fresh-water fish, while the cod at home is found only in the sea. It reaches a large size—say ten or twelve pounds—and is found plentifully in many of the large rivers of the southern colonies, among the inhabitants of which it is very highly esteemed.

The whiting is well represented along the coasts, where it delights to poke about the sandy shores just outside the long line of breakers. It can be caught with a line having an appropriate hook and bait thrown from the shore. It attains a size a shade larger than the whiting of Europe, but very much resembles it in appearance and in flesh. If not the real whiting, its Australian namesake is certainly a good imitation. The gar-fish—commonly called 'guard-fish'—is similar to, if not the same as 'the mackerel guide' of British waters, and is a peculiar fish with a long protruding under-jaw. It wanders in shoals, and can only be taken by special nets. It is one of the daintiest of Australian fish, and a general favourite for breakfast.

The most common of all the Australian fish, and, perhaps, those most easily caught, are mullets. In flesh and appearance these fish seem to be exactly the same as those found in home waters. In habit they are similar. Here they seem to be constantly in season. They are the staple food of the fish-eating inhabitants—a food to which our population can return when other fish have gone 'off.' They never answer to the allurements of rod and line, but are caught in vast quantities with nets in our lakes and tidal waters. The mullet, as we have said, is an all-round fish, although perhaps a little too rich for most palates unless cooked in a particular way. Next to the mullet in quantity are bream and black-fish. These are also taken by net, and vast quantities are sent daily to the

metropolis of each colony. They generally inhabit the same lakes and are caught in the same nets as the mullet. The bream—generally pronounced 'brim'—though having much the appearance of the British sea-bream, belongs to a distinct family. The Australian variety grows up to three pounds or even five pounds weight, but fish that are not quite so heavy are generally more highly appreciated. The species called silver bream is that which is most esteemed.

The king of Australian fishes is undoubtedly the schnapper. We speak not now of the trumpeter of Tasmania nor of the blue cod of New Zealand, about which the inhabitants of these colonies are not unnaturally proud. Judging by his shape, the schnapper is an ugly fish. His colour is good, but his proportions are not fair, as he lies on the slab of the fishmonger. On your first introduction to a ten-pound schnapper on the end of your line he strikes you as an interesting acquaintance of whom you would like to know more. On your subsequent intimacy at table you forget much of his unsightliness. He is, however, gibbous and unsymmetrical, having a strange lump on his head, which gives him a startled appearance. This fish is always caught with rod and line, and the manner of his taking is peculiar.

The home of the schnapper is in the deep sea, generally a considerable distance from the shore and in the immediate neighbourhood of a shelving reef. Good schnapper-fishing may, however, be had from the rocks of the mainland or an island. Every holiday in Sydney there are hundreds who go forth to fish for schnapper. For this purpose it is usual to club funds and charter a small steamer. By this means the expense is lessened, while the party is made more enjoyable. The bait is usually the flesh of mullet or other fish cut up. When the boat has arrived at the fishing-ground selected, steam is shut off, and the vessel allowed to drift with the tide or wind. Then the hooks are baited, and the lines cast forth, the fishers occupying the side opposite to the drift of the vessel. When the conditions are favourable, a large harvest is usually the result, as schnapper bite very freely. There are two or three hooks on each line, and it is no uncommon sight to see every line coming in with each hook holding a schnapper. This is real fun; and may last any time from ten minutes to two or three hours. When the school of fish has passed, the steamer will generally shift to other quarters. When two holidays come together, schnapper-parties are in vogue in Sydney. As in the winter season we have the calmest weather, as a rule, it is no unusual sight to see our amateur fishermen returning on Saturday or Sunday evening with hundreds and hundreds of fish. Most of the take is presented to friends, but many of them find their way to Woolloomooloo, wherein lies the Billingsgate of Sydney. We have only regarded the amateur so far, but there are many others who, going forth in all sorts of craft, depend upon schnapper-fishing as a means of increasing their livelihood.

The fish of Australia have one or two peculiarities which are worth noting. Many of them are fantastic. Most of them are brilliantly coloured. The rock-cod is a beautiful pink with a sheen not unlike that of plush or velvet as he dies. The

nangai is almost scarlet. The maori has light-blue patches interspersed through vivid tints, like the tattooed face of the aboriginal of New Zealand. The sergeant-baker is well named. He wears the gaudy uniform of a most distinguished recruiting officer. Another peculiarity of the Australian fish is the quantity of spines in which they are arrayed, and with which they may defend themselves. The beautiful rock-cod is a perfect demon for spines, as are most of the others. Indeed the fishermen of Australia must needs be cautious, or a bad wound for weeks afterwards may remind him unpleasantly of his holiday.

Before closing may we be pardoned for mentioning the oyster? This delicious mollusc is of two kinds—the mud-oyster and the rock-oyster. The former grows to a larger size, but the rock-oyster is more generally esteemed for flavour. Their names indicate their place of growth. The rock-oyster loves the beds and adjoining rocks of tidal streams. They grow in clusters, in a variety of shapes and sizes, and each cluster is attached to something solid. Here they are alternately bathed in salt water and in fresh or brackish. They are also left for hours high and dry until the incoming tide refreshes them. Nor do these oysters always select rocks on which to dwell. This accommodating mollusc may frequently be found adhering to the roots and lower branches of the mangrove and other trees which delight in a sort of submarine residence. It is doubtless to this peculiarity that the sailor referred when he wrote to his mother at home, telling the old lady, and not untruly, that in Australia oysters grow on trees.

Many other edible fishes are plentiful in Australian waters, but we think we have enumerated the most prominent of the number.

VILLANELLE.

THE past is o'er—

Waste not thy days in vain regret:
Grieve thou no more.

Look now before

And not behind thee; do not fret—
The past is o'er.

Thy pain is sore

And thou hast cause for sorrow, yet
Grieve thou no more.

Close Memory's door—

That day is dead, that sun has set—
The past is o'er.

There is in store

For thee still happy days. Forget!
Grieve thou no more.

Smile as of yore—

No longer let thine eyes be wet.
The past is o'er.
Grieve thou no more!

M. H. W.

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A TRAPPIST MONASTERY IN NATAL.

By CARLYLE SMYTHIE, B.A.

DURBAN, the port of Natal, is, like Jerusalem, 'beautiful for situation,' despite the fact that the alleged port is nothing but an open roadstead where passengers are always landed in a sort of marine lift, a small wicker-work chamber constructed to hold four inside, and rigged to a derrick. By this comfortable contrivance one is lowered with ease and safety from the steamer to the tender.

The city, which is not the capital of the colony although the largest town, lies just a little below the tropic of Capricorn, and thus enjoys a temperately warm climate, and is graced with a rich tropical vegetation that justifies the town's unchallenged claim to be the garden city of South Africa. Indeed in this respect the whole colony of Natal stands out in precise contrast to the surrounding states, a bright green gem in the weary waste of the monotonous brown *veldt*. It is the Wales of South Africa, and with a sturdy spirit of independence has paddled its own canoe against that of its bigger and richer rival, the Cape Colony. Possibly the large leaven of Scot, particularly in Durban, is responsible for this solidarity and stubbornness in a contest where the odds were certainly not equal. The population is of a very mixed description, and there is a distinct Oriental touch about it that is pleasant and refreshing. The ricksha is the favourite public conveyance; but instead of the small vehicle of Ceylon and Japan, that of Natal, although still light in structure, is capable of carrying two persons. Only a race of giants, such as the Basuto and his kindred tribes are, could manage a double-seated ricksha up the inclines round about the city. In stature and physique the Bantu tribes are probably the finest specimens of humanity on the globe. Certainly they are superior to the Maori, although perhaps the latter is the bigger brained creature of the two. But strong as he is, the native of Natal is disinclined to work any more than is necessary for keeping body and soul

together. Consequently although he is the common and convenient means of haulage, he is not the representative working-man of the colony. Thousands of Hindus, chiefly Madrasis, have been imported under government auspices, as servants and labourers; and with such satisfactory results that what was once a thin stream of immigration has assumed the proportions of a tidal bore. So great indeed is the increase that there is every reason to fear some serious complication of the gravest question which the Government of Natal has to deal with—namely, the native question. There are now 50,000 Indians in the colony, that is to say, they equal the whites in number; whilst there are nearly 500,000 natives, who, although averse to anything approaching continuous effort, are yet obliged to do some work in order to pay their annual hut-tax and provide the necessaries of life. A little larger increase in the supply of Indian labour, and the native will be shut out from all employment. To be sure, the influx of Asiatics may inspire the native to less spasmodic work. That would be a result as splendid as it was unexpected; and then it would become the business of the government to hinder by a poll-tax (as in California and Australia) or other preventive measure the Asiatic invasion.

But pretty as Durban itself was, and interesting as was its labour problem, there was yet something outside the city that possessed stronger attractions for me. About sixteen miles from the town was a Trappist Monastery, and a day's excursion to this home of silence remains in my mind as the most salient experience during my brief sojourn in Natal. I believe that strictly speaking there is no longer any such congregation as a Trappist brotherhood, since by a decree of the present pope the order has been amalgamated with the Carthusians; but it is simpler to adhere for present purposes to the old appellation, not in any measure as a rigid Protestant's dissent from a papal decree, but because the place and the order are so widely known under the old style. About fourteen years ago some Trappist brothers purchased 12,000 acres near the very small village

of Pinetown, christening the property Marianhill, and here, unaided except by the lay brothers, they began their stupendous work. They made their own bricks, cut their own timber, and contrived their own water-supply, buying nothing except galvanised iron and machinery, which were obviously beyond their powers of construction. Yet they have been able to make a system of roads through the property, build bridges, erect a large brick church capable of holding six hundred persons, also a still larger building that comprises the refectory and monks' cells; and finally, in addition to all this, they have constructed several substantial houses, schools, and workshops. Among the latter are to be seen an iron-foundry, a tannery, a large carpenters' shop, bootmaking and tailoring establishments, a bakery, a flour-mill, and, most surprising of all, a vast printing office, which includes not only the most modern printers' plant but also stereotyping and book-binding departments; whilst attached to it is another building where the monks found their own type. The produce of all these factories is not of course limited to the needs of the brothers any more than is the liqueur manufactured at either the Grande Chartreuse or St Elmo. From the tannery, for instance, where the pelt is treated in all its stages from the raw hide to the finished article in leather, the monks send saddles, bags, and straps away even into the heart of Matabeleland or anywhere else where there may be a demand. In the carpenters' shop, wheels, doors, and window-sashes are manufactured for the contractors of Durban; whilst the printing office, at the time of my visit, was busily employed on a government contract.

All these edifices and works are the result of but fourteen years' labour, and at no time have the monks gone outside their own ranks for assistance. How has it been accomplished? Monks, novices, and lay-brothers retire at eight and rise at midnight or one in the morning according to the season of the year; whilst the rest of the twenty-four hours, except when the offices are being said and during the half-hours devoted to meals, they work at their several tasks. At all times unbooted and unbonneted, and, except in the schools, where the nature of the vocation makes it impossible, in absolute silence, the monks go through their daily round of incessant toil. The Trappists are vegetarians of the strictest sort. I was present at the principal meal of the day—dinner, and partly partook of it. The menu consisted of a thick barley-broth without either fat or any extract of meat, and a mash made of turnips, carrots, pumpkins, and beans, without condiment or seasoning of any kind, but there was plenty of beautifully-baked brown bread, and the whole was washed down with a cup of tamarind wine, an agreeable unfermented drink. The brethren ate the meal in silence, and the stillness of the huge refectory was broken only by the intermittent clink of a knife on some tin plate and the droning voice of the brother whose turn it was, while the others dined, to read aloud some passage from the Vulgate. When the meal was finished, each taking his plate and cup, handed them to the brother who acted as cook; and, thanking him, not in words, but with a grateful smile and bowed head, passed out immediately to some appointed task. To me it was altogether a

touching sight. Here were over one hundred and fifty strongly-built men who had not only left father and mother in some far land for His sake, but had denied themselves all the comforts and solaces of this world, even to the sweet sound of the human voice. All, except the youthful novices (who were still plump and rosy), bore traces, in the pallid complexion and hollow cheek, of the austerity of their life; most of them also were spectacles. To what purpose is this stern devotion mainly directed? Simply to the end that a few hundred black brethren may be taught the knowledge of God and the consolations of the Church. I am not a Catholic, nor have I much sympathy with some of the practices and tenets of that Church; but I should like to feel that the congregation to which I do belong could actively testify, as eloquently as the Trappist monastery of Marianhill does for the Catholic, how much self-sacrifice and real suffering can be endured, how much good work can be accomplished, how high an example can be set when one is thus securely 'mailed in the perfect paup'ry of faith.' The Roman may be wrong in his solutions of the deep problem of life and the still deeper one of futurity. Such are matters which we may not know with certainty; the most plausible solution is, after all, a mere groping in the dark; but in the deeds that find words, in the examples that move us on to nobler ends, these white-robed brothers of St Bernard may teach Protestants not a few salutary lessons.

It sometimes happens, of course, that some fall under the burden; the cross is too heavy and the habit is renounced. In this connection there was a curious and somewhat beautiful incident that came under my notice on that visit. In our tour round the well-cared-for grounds, the brother—there is always one who has a speaking part for the sake of the visitors—told me that only the week before they had buried one of the monks who had grown gray in the service of the order, and who had planned and cultivated the grounds, in which he had always taken the deepest pride, but his part now,

. . . In all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills,
Is that his grave is green.

In telling this there was no note of sadness in the monk's voice, but rather of happiness that one more of them had been bound into the sheaf of kindred souls. A little later on, however, when in the carpenters' shop, seeing one evidently of the outer world, for he wore neither habit nor clerical mark, I inquired who he was. 'Ah, poor fellow!' said the monk, 'for nearly three years he was a Trappist, and then sought permission to retire. He left us; but he returned two months ago seeking help; so we are teaching him a trade in which he can surely earn a living in the world.' This confession of a failure was in a sad key, and there was emotion in the eyes of the speaker. The dead brother was not lost to them, but merely separated and resting from his labours and happy. This man, on the contrary, who was once in the ranks, had failed in strength and courage; and although the monks ungrudgingly assisted him, they were sad in the belief that he was a strayed sheep and in peril.

With delightful prescience, the Prior, concluding

that the lenten entertainment of the refectory might not be sufficient nourishment for his worldly visitors, had arranged by telephone—just think of that for one moment, a telephone in a Trappist monastery—for us to take luncheon at the convent, which was situate about a mile from the monastery. In our walk towards the convent we were met by a brother, who, I was told, enjoyed quite a celebrity in the community—he was the engineering genius of the place, and in his case, for a reason I could not ascertain, the law of silence had been considerably relaxed, so we stopped to barter a few words. In the course of conversation, a young journalist, who had conducted our party from Durban, happened to say that he was showing Mark Twain over the monastery, explaining briefly who Mark Twain was, and ended by asking the brother if he had ever heard of the author of *The Innocents Abroad*. 'What! Mark Twain?' exclaimed the monk; 'the real Mark Twain? Where is he? which is he? I must speak to him;' and then in a whisper, as if he were confessing some horrible sin, 'I've read all his books. Yes, everything he has published.' He had his desire granted and accompanied the Tramp Abroad as far as the convent. The fellow had a magnificent laugh, such as that of Herr Teufelsdröckh, a 'laugh of the whole man from head to heel.' This brother was the one worldly note in those sad and silent surroundings, and his laugh appears almost incredible in the retrospect. Unlike the other monks whom we had seen, and who were all foreigners, chiefly Austrians and Germans, this one was an Englishman, and his bright address and cheery speech seemed to rouse us all out of a depression that had subdued our own conversation almost to whispers. Amidst the brotherhood of pathetic and grim-visaged ascetics it was very pleasant to meet this apostle of cheerful godliness; and I should like to think—what might really be—that his hearty laugh was mainly the result of long practice over the healthy pages of Mark Twain.

The convent was of most modest dimensions compared with the monastery; but from the many plain wooden crosses in the acre alongside there was ample evidence that in the short span of ten years many a sister had given her life for the coloured children of that region. Here was just the same air of abstinence and incessant toil as prevailed among the brothers, but the industry was naturally directed into appropriate channels, such as needlework, laundry, and the manufacture of straw hats. The Superior was a Canadian; and it was noticeable that the law of silence was not insisted upon in the convent. This was perhaps a humane, not to say inevitable, concession to a congregation of women.

By the time luncheon was prepared we were all quite famished, and I, for one, still had the nauseous flavour of the monkish fare in my mouth. The meal, which was plain but satisfying, consisted of an exceptionally tough chicken, over a portion of which I spent a considerable amount of unavailing labour—vegetarians, however, cannot be regarded as experts in the choice of even a fowl; a peculiar salad made with oil extracted from monkey-nuts and vinegar manufactured from pineapple; great square thick slices of bread, some pasties, and sweet beer. Our neat-handed Phyllis was a nun of the red habit,

whom, the luncheon finished, we thanked in the limited vocabulary of French that we enjoyed in common. But we were not to leave Marianhill without a little theatrical incident. A priest who had come out with us from Durban had mounted into the vehicle with the precedence commonly accorded to the cloth. He had scarcely seated himself when a shrill pathetic voice cried out: '*Hélas! mon père, mon père, vous ne m'avez pas béni;*' and like a flash a red habit brushed past us and prostrated itself in the dust alongside the trap. It was Phyllis; and the priest had to dismount to confer the omitted benediction—I thought in a rather perfunctory manner—receiving in return a grateful '*Merci, bien merci, mon père!*'

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XV.

PHILIPPOF did not court discovery and disaster by showing himself during daylight in the greater thoroughfares, where he would be likely to meet and be recognised by old friends and brother officers. The necessity to lie *perdu* was disagreeable but obvious; also it was calculated to render him morbid and bitter towards those to whose actions all his troubles were to be attributed. Clerk's work in an office is not the ideal employment from the point of view of a soldier: he hated it cordially; but, contrasted with his existence within the walls of the fortress, the counting-house was a paradise. Contrast, again, with the free and ambitious and glorious life of a soldier in war-time, it was—well, the other thing! Nevertheless, he endured it with a fair amount of patience considering his naturally impatient and indignant temperament; and if he fumed and cursed his enemies and the authors of his misfortunes in private, and in his bitter moments, he did nothing foolish in public. His life was not without alarms, however. For instance, walking one day by the quay, he suddenly became aware of two or three drosukies approaching rapidly, each occupied by a plumed officer, and before Sasha could turn aside or conceal his face with his pocket-handkerchief he recognised the Tsar, followed as usual by Dostoiéf and others.

Philippos pretended to drop his glove and bent to pick it up. He saw that the Tsar looked fixedly at him as though endeavouring to recall his features, but the vehicle dashed by and his Majesty apparently failed to attach a name to the face he half-recognised. As for Dostoiéf, most fortunately for Philippos, he was busily occupied in watching the hoofs of his splendid trotter, which appeared to have developed a limp. How poor Sasha blessed that timely lameness and wished the horse a speedy cure and a happy old age for his opportune misfortune! But he ground his teeth at the cavalcade as it hastened away out of sight, and inwardly shook his fist and spat at it (if those operations can be said to be performed internally—at all events he did neither externally). These were the authors of all his troubles: why should he any longer feel loyalty towards a man whose life he had saved and who had

promptly repaid him for the service by absolutely and hopelessly ruining him? Surely he had a right to hate and to curse such a man!—Half-an-hour later Sasha laughed at the episode and exonerated the Tsar from blame, as he generally did when he reflected quietly and dispassionately. He exonerated the Tsar, but not Dostoief; with Dostoief there must be a reckoning, one day! On another occasion Philipof had an agitating experience. It was the namesday of St Olga, and Sasha had purchased a lovely cross of white flowers to lay upon his poor cousin's grave at the Smolensky Cemetery.

Olga's tomb was at the corner of an alley, and was separated by a railed enclosure from the two roads which ran at right angles to one another; and in rounding this corner Philipof was surprised to observe a gorgeously-decorated officer kneeling at the cross which marked dead Olga's resting-place. The last person in the world he had expected to see here was one who, in the natural fitness of things, should have been the most likely of all to be kneeling at his wife's grave on such an occasion—Dostoief. Philipof recognised him in a moment, but it was then too late to draw back; he therefore made no attempt to escape, but leant against the iron railing which surrounded the little plot of ground, and waited until Dostoief, who had seen him come round the corner, should make the first move. He was surprised and a little softened to see Dostoief here, the more so as he observed that he had been weeping. There must be a fine, if mysterious, quality of devotion about this man, he thought, since he could apparently be so sincerely attached to a woman that he visited her grave some months after her death, and yet had systematically neglected her during life out of an exaggerated sense of duty towards his employer the Tsar!

Dostoief rose from his knees, crossing himself. He looked pale and haggard, the little colour he possessed having quite left his face at the moment of catching sight of Sasha.

'So you escaped, after all,' he said. 'I guessed you had, though the lying warder swore to seeing you go down beneath the ice.'

'Yes, I escaped,' said the other; 'no thanks to the warder, nor yet to you. I suppose,' he added, 'you will now take steps to have me re-arrested?'

Dostoief started and looked if possible a shade paler still; he considered a moment.

'That is, of course, my plain duty to his Majesty,' he said, 'but—'

'Yes, but'—Philipof repeated bitterly.

'But,' continued Dostoief, 'here, at Olga's grave, I am tempted to be, for the first time, unfaithful to my beloved master; she always came to some extent between me and my duty towards him, in life; and now in death it is the same—I am tempted to betray him by allowing you to escape, for her sake.' Philipof ground his teeth with rage.

'And I too am tempted, Dostoief,' he said. 'I am tempted to take you by the throat and to say, "Now—one of us shall go and one remain—having met, we must fight to the death." But I cannot, here, over her very head. Moreover, I have vowed, for her sake, to keep my hands off you, otherwise I should certainly chastise you as you deserve, for your treatment of her and of me.' Dostoief laughed scornfully.

'This is very ridiculous,' he said; 'you forget that I am armed and you are defenceless; it is easy to talk as you do. I repeat, I shall allow you to depart and shall further betray my master by saying nothing as to having seen you. But if we meet again—elsewhere—I shall certainly do my duty.' Therefore I counsel you to keep clear of me. You will understand that I believe you to be guilty of the attempt upon his Majesty's life; the student's version is circumstantial and positive.'

'He is a liar,' said Philipof, 'and you are another. As for your master'—Dostoief flushed red and paled again.

'Leave his Majesty out of the discussion,' he interrupted; 'do not try me beyond endurance, Philipof. There is a limit, even here!'

'Thrust me through the body if you like,' said the other; 'I am unarmed, as you say; it would be the kind of justice to suit his Majesty, your indulgent master. Imprisonment and stabbing for one of those who have saved his life—decorations and honours and wealth for another. Come, stab, if you mean stabbing, or else go away and leave me here with my sorrow. This wrangling over her grave is foolish and unseemly.'

Dostoief hesitated a moment as though he were undetermined whether to do as invited, and thrust his sword through this undesirable relative's body, or not. Then he glanced at the cross over his wife's grave, and departed without a word; he could not very well draw the sword upon her friend here, richly as that friend deserved chastisement, and vile though he believed him to be.

Philipof was sore and angry. It was too bad that destiny should have delivered this man into his hands only to tantalise him. Why had Olga, in dying, left him this unwelcome legacy of mercy! Sword or no sword, he felt he could have fallen upon the fellow and strangled him but for Olga's last injunctions! Why, of his own confession, this man actually believed him guilty of the attempt upon the Tsar's life! That being the case, it was no wonder he was kept a close prisoner in the fortress: the Tsar would naturally take his cue from this precious aide-de-camp of his, who should have been the first to champion the faithful friend and guardian of his wife, and yet was the first to condemn him!

'Oh Olga, Olga,' Philipof whispered, as he laid his cross upon the grave, 'I have borne much for your sake to-day!'

Afterwards, however, when he reflected calmly upon the agitating event of the morning, he saw clearly that it was in every way better that the matter should have passed off without anything more actively violent than excited language from both sides. If he had attacked and killed Dostoief, things would have been extremely awkward for him; he would have been caught before long, and his formal imprisonment in the fortress, with decent food and fair treatment, would have been exchanged for deportation to the mines of Siberia; while, on the other hand, if he had failed to get the better of Dostoief, his fate would have been, first, a dig in the body from a sword, followed by the journey to Siberia—unless, that is, the dig had been so mercifully formidable as to have dug the life out of him. Nevertheless, while he remained at the cemetery, poor Philipof felt very sorry for himself, and even shed unfamiliar tears over Olga's grave, repeating to him-

self over and over again how much he had suffered to-day for this dead woman's sake!

After this interview Sasha did not see Dostoief again for many a long day. He lived peacefully at his lodgings for nearly two years, working at the Englishman's office, and visiting constantly, at safe hours, the little children, Olga's son and daughter. It was a quiet uneventful existence, and not of the kind to satisfy Philipof, who longed for something to happen which would restore him to his lost position and honour among his fellows; but the days went on and on, and life became very monotonous and dreary, until at last something did happen to change the even course of his existence, though it was not precisely the kind of event he either expected or desired.

When first Sasha had engaged his present lodgings, the *dvornik* (or yard porter, whose duty it is to see that all dwellers in the house are provided with passports and to hand these, when collected, to the district policeman, who, again, passes them on to the proper authorities), as in duty bound, asked for his 'papers.' Now Philipof had no papers. These had been taken from his old lodgings by the police; and even if he had possessed his passport as Alexander Philipof of the Okhotsk Regiment, he could not have used it without risking immediate discovery and arrest, for he now figured as plain Mr Ivan Pavlof, merchant's clerk. He therefore declared, after a long display of searching, that he had lost his passport. That was very unfortunate, the *dvornik* observed. Philipof agreed that it was very unfortunate, and toyed with a bank-note for twenty-five roubles. Then the *dvornik* scratched his head for inspiration.

'Your mercifulness is quite sure your name is Ivan Pavlof?' he said at last.

'I am not at all sure, my good man,' said Philipof; 'for when one loses one's papers he may easily forget what is written in them.'

'Because I was thinking,' continued the other, 'that if it had happened to be Alexey Blinof, now, I believe I should know where to lay my hand upon your lost passport at this very moment.'

'Why, I declare, that *is* my name, of course,' said Philipof; 'how silly of me to forget it—Alexey Shinoof, of course.'

'Blinof,' corrected the *dvornik*.

'Blinof, Blinof, of course,' assented Philipof. The passport was duly handed to the policeman, and the twenty-five roubles to the *dvornik*; and when the policeman had been to congratulate Mr A. Blinof upon the happy discovery of his passport, and had pocketed a similar *douceur*, the thing was in order.

But two years or so later, the last-named official died or was removed, and another came in his place. The first time Philipof saw him he seemed to remember his features, but could not recall where they had met. Alas! the policeman had a better memory. He it was who had arrested Philipof at the gate of the Summer Gardens and had conveyed him to the fortress. This man had heard of the escape of Philipof and of his drowning, but a careful inspection of his features assured him beyond doubt that this was the identical runaway political prisoner whom he had once, to his great and endless glory, arrested: the only professional feat he had ever performed; he was not likely to forget it. Here was a prize indeed!

The policeman went straight to the head of his district and told his tale. The chief discerned fame and fortune in the affair, and sent to the fortress to make inquiries, with the result that that very evening, as poor Philipof sat at his supper, a squad of constabulary suddenly entered the room, carried away every paper they could find, sealed up every door, and seized the person of Sasha himself for inquiry and identification.

And thus Philipof presently found himself once more a tenant of the very cell from which he had escaped with so much difficulty four years ago; and here he remained in solitude and wretchedness, though always well treated, for upwards of a year, until Alexander II., in his clemency, and as a preliminary to his great act of serf emancipation, declared an amnesty in favour of all who, like Philipof, had been imprisoned for political offences; and for the second time he left the prison behind him and stepped forth a free man.

MARVELS OF PHOSPHORESCENCE.

WHETHER we look at the subject from a scientific point of view, or from that of the mere spectator who likes to see pretty experiments, there is hardly anything more fascinating than phosphorescence. Long before Ulysses and his comrades urged their galleys through the darkness, the rowers must have wondered at the luminous water dripping from their oars, and conjured up visions of Nereids sitting among the rocks. It is only within the last few years, however, that these beautiful phenomena have been explained. As science advanced, it was found that many things in addition to glow-worms and small marine animals were phosphorescent. The great progress in mathematical physics since the middle of this century led to their investigation by Sir G. Stokes and others, so that all these manifestations of light now admit of explanation. Professor Dewar, so well known for his work on liquefied air, not long ago gave the Chemical Society an account of his experiments on phosphorescence at very low temperatures. These remarkable experiments, conducted with substances cooled down within a short distance of absolute zero (the point where even hydrogen will be reduced to an inert solid, where all motion will be destroyed, and the life of the very atoms themselves suspended as it were), carry the light of our knowledge far down the dark vistas of the unknown. Beautiful as the experiments were in themselves, it was this light thrown on the dark places, these glimpses into the nature of things that appealed to every one present.

Light is so universal and so commonplace that we rarely think about or try to understand its cause. If we are to appreciate the full beauty and significance of these experiments in phosphorescence, it is necessary to have some clear conception of modern discoveries as to the nature of light. Now, although it requires the highest mathematics

to deal with the subject seriously, yet, by the help of a metaphor first used by Sir Gabriel Stokes, it is fortunately quite easy to follow the main features of the wave theory of light. In the early days of science, light, as also heat, was thought to be a substance emitted by the luminous body. This substance, striking the eye of the spectator, was thought to produce the sensation of vision. Modern scientists regard it quite differently. They, with good reason, regard the whole universe, from the largest star to the tiniest chemical atom, as floating in a sea of imponderable matter called the 'ether.' In this sea of ether, waves of light and heat travel in much the same way that waves travel across the Atlantic Ocean. The intensity of the light depends on the height of the waves in the same way that the power of the oceanic wave depends on its height. In the sea there are long slow waves and short quick waves. In the ether, the former correspond to red light, which produces heating effect; and the latter to violet light, producing chemical action. Now comes Sir G. Stokes's explanation of phosphorescence. Suppose we imagine the atoms of a particular body to be a number of ships anchored close together. Suppose the waves from a distant storm to reach them. If the waves are long compared to the ships, the vessels will rise and fall with them; and when the waves cease to move them, the ships will remain stationary. But, if the waves are too short the ships will roll irregularly and give out waves of their own. Even after the cessation of the original waves, the vessels will go on rolling and giving rise to undulations. In the same way, the particles of a phosphorescent body go on rolling, or vibrating, as it is termed, and setting up light waves in the ether sea long after the light has ceased to shine upon them from without.

After the glow-worm and the luminous animalcules of the sea, the best-known example of a phosphorescent body is, probably, Balmain's luminous paint; the active substance in it being barium sulphide (made by heating barytes or heavy-spar with charcoal), the particles of which continue vibrating and setting up waves of light for many hours after they are placed in darkness. Attempts were made to employ this substance as a coating for the buoys that mark the channels at sea, and there were many exhibits at the Fisheries Exhibition a few years ago showing its usefulness in this connection. It was proposed, also, to employ the paint for ambulance wagons; and, last of all, for making luminous sights for rifles. The substance, however, loses its light-giving power after a time, and requires to be heated to restore its activity. Curiously enough, phosphorus is not phosphorescent in the sense that we have been using the word; the luminosity being due to its burning slowly away in the air even at the ordinary temperature. The word 'phosphorus,' by the way, in the days of the alchemists, included all bodies that appeared luminous in the dark. These substances are nearly all similar in composition to the luminous paint.

As science advanced, a new class of bodies,

known as fluorescent substances, were discovered. Nearly every one must have noticed the curious violet lustre possessed by a solution of sulphate of quinine, the yellow fluorescence of uranium glass, and the green or reddish light diffused by many of the dyes derived from coal tar. Some of these latter, such as uranine, are exceedingly beautiful. A solution, perfectly transparent when held between the eye and the light, will seem to be composed of exquisite tiny red or green spangles when viewed the other way. Rays of light extend far beyond either end of the colours that our imperfect eyes can see in the spectrum. Beyond the red, they are known as dark heat rays, and beyond the violet, as ultra-violet rays. When a solution of sulphate of quinine is moved along the visible spectrum until the violet has been passed, a strange thing happens: the quinine makes the dark violet rays visible, and the bottle is filled with violet light. If we look at a rainbow through a solution of quinine, the violet band will broaden out considerably. The explanation is a simple one: the particles of quinine, not being able to dance to the tune of the short ultra-violet waves, merely roll like the ships we were speaking of just now, and give out much longer waves, which are visible to us as ordinary violet light. Although the fluorescence appears to vanish immediately the light is cut off, it has been proved by very delicate experiments that it does continue for a minute fraction of time.

Before commencing his experiments on phosphorescence in his lecture to the Chemical Society, Professor Dewar showed the effect of extreme cold on the rigidity of bodies. A soft metal coil, which lengthened out when a tiny weight was hung upon it at the temperature of the room, was plunged, hissing and spluttering like a red-hot iron dipped in water, into a flask of liquid oxygen at a temperature of -210° C. When the oxygen had ceased to boil, and the coil had fallen to the temperature of the liquid, it was withdrawn and appeared as rigid as hard steel wire. This experiment has a distinct bearing on our theories of light waves, which may seem rather far-fetched and illusory to those who have not studied the subject. Let us see what would happen in the case of the ships at anchor that we considered before. Imagine them to be held down by many anchors, so that they are much more rigid than they were. Under these circumstances they will ride uneasily over the waves, and will have a tendency to convert all the short waves that strike them into long ones. In the case of our particles floating in the ether sea and disturbed by the waves of light, a precisely similar effect should be produced. As the atoms become more rigid, they, too, should vibrate irregularly when the short waves strike them, and go on doing so long after the original light has ceased. In a word, they should be much more phosphorescent than they were at the ordinary temperature. In practice it was found that this actually was the case, every substance being much more luminous at the low temperature. Very beautiful some of the experiments were: horn, bone, feathers, and similar materials gave a magnificent greenish

phosphorescence after they had been cooled in liquid oxygen and exposed for a short time to the rays of the electric arc. An egg, when treated in the same way, glowed like a gigantic opal in the darkened room. Pure water hardly phosphoresced at all, but milk, frozen in liquid oxygen, was very luminous.

For exquisite beauty, however, the preceding experiments are not to be compared to the phosphorescence produced by the ultra-violet rays of the electric discharge acting on substances in high vacua. Any one who has seen Sir William Crookes's beautiful exhibits at the soirées of the Royal Society will never forget them. In describing them we can only say that they glowed with such and such a coloured light, for it is utterly impossible by mere word-pictures to convey the glorious effects of these phosphorescent bodies: the deep rosy reds, the gorgeous blues and greens, the brilliant oranges and yellows. To spend half an hour in watching them is like a vision into the future. Whilst such beauties actually *exist*, what possibilities may there not be of others that will transcend these completely? The vacuum tube used by Mr Jackson, whose work on phosphorescence is the most recent, is about six inches long, and has a perforated shelf in the middle on which the substance under experiment is placed between the two terminals of the wires conveying the electric current. The latter is supplied by a powerful battery connected to an induction coil giving an eight-inch spark in the air. A side-tube leads from the vacuum tube to an air-pump capable of producing a high degree of exhaustion; the pressure of the air still left in the tube at any time being shown by a very delicate gage. Mr Jackson, in his paper read before the Chemical Society, describes the effects that are produced on the beautiful crimson glow of alumina as the air is gradually removed from the tube. A considerable exhaustion was necessary before the glow commenced, and when this was carried still further, a little spot in the direct line of the electric discharge glowed with increased brilliancy. Then it died out, but the intensity of the bright spot had been so great that for a time it appeared black to the observer's eye by contrast. As the vacuum increased, the whole of the alumina had the appearance of being carried up to a white heat; then again the central spot looked black and the whole of the bright light gradually died out. When the vacuum was so high that the electrical discharge would hardly pass, the central spot commenced to phosphoresce again, while all the rest was dark, but the light it gave out now was blue.

Mr Jackson found that different substances required different degrees of exhaustion to become phosphorescent. To understand the reason for this, we must say a few words about the 'negative glow'—that is, the halo that surrounds the terminal of the conductor bringing the negative current from the induction coil. Vacuum tubes are such common exhibits at conversations and bazaars that nearly every one must have had the opportunity of seeing them at work, and noticing the curious halo that surrounds the negative electrode. This

halo is caused by the phosphorescence of the air or other gas in the tube, for the exhaustion is not complete. If, whilst the current is passing, we commence exhausting a vacuum tube *de novo*, we shall notice that we have to remove a large portion of the air before the negative halo commences. As the exhaustion proceeds still further, the glow increases and extends, until finally it nearly fills the tube. If, however, we carry the exhaustion to a very high pitch, the glow gradually decreases until it vanishes, practically, altogether. When waves of light of a particular length cause a body to phosphoresce, these waves, as we explained previously, are destroyed, and others, given off by the vibration of the particles of the body itself, take their places. It has been noticed that some substances glow readily when the tube is only slightly exhausted, whilst others, such as lime made from Iceland spar, glowed brilliantly in a rather higher vacuum; and alumina, magnesia, zinc oxide, &c., required still further exhaustion before the glow commenced. Now comes the reason for it: rays of all kinds are coming from the electrode, and the very waves that cause the alumina or magnesia, for instance, to phosphoresce, are destroyed by the air in the tube, which is glowing itself. As the air is removed, these waves, with short distances between them, are able to reach the substances on the glass shelf, which glow immediately. Some materials will not glow until the negative halo actually reaches them; whilst others would not glow until the exhaustion had been carried so high that the negative halo had almost disappeared.

It is these rays from the negative halo that contain Röntgen's X rays which have lately absorbed almost the whole interest of the scientific and photographic worlds. What these X rays are nobody knows. It is possible that they are waves of light vibrating not like ordinary waves, but like the movement of an eel. Perhaps they are not waves of light at all, but streams of chemical atoms carrying the electric discharge. In any case their power of penetrating substances, such as ebonite, which are quite opaque to ordinary light, is very remarkable.

To the chemist and the mathematician the study of phosphorescence is most fascinating, for it carries us to the very gates of the fortress where Nature guards her most wonderful secrets. The possibility is mooted that the blue of the summer sky is merely the phosphorescence of the air in its ravified upper regions, caused by waves of light from the sun that never reach our eyes. Sun-spots which seem to be glimpses of the central body of the sun, seen through occasional rifts in its glowing atmosphere, appear dark to us, because either the waves of light are so short that our imperfect eyes cannot see them, and the intensely hot body of the sun appears dark in consequence, or that these rays are absorbed in the upper regions of the air, giving rise to the auroras that always occur at these times, and are similar to the negative glow in a vacuum tube. Before long we shall ascertain, perhaps, what this something is that manifests itself sometimes as light and sometimes as electricity. We know not what to

call it, for it is not force and it is not energy, yet by its means the throbs and heart beats of the universe pass from sun to planet, and from star to star.

THE FURNACEMAN.

CHAPTER IV.

THE man whom Geordie was seeking so earnestly and eagerly was employed at an iron-smelting works distant about a mile and a half from the stone cottage. The various buildings and furnaces were situated near the head of a small dell on one side of the Heath, its open end being in the direct path of the storm. The works belonged to a company that, by all accounts, had much trouble to make both ends meet. It was also reported to possess very poor plant, not being able to lay out the necessary money to keep it in efficient repair.

As Geordie came to the rim of the small depression in the Heath—for really it was hardly worthy of the name of dell—and looked down upon the ironworks, he at once noticed something was wrong. What it was he could not at first make out, except that a number of men were running and staggering about in the wind below, and seemed, even at that distance, to be in a state of great excitement.

'Why,' he exclaimed, as the truth flashed upon him, 'where's the first blast?'

The works had four blast-furnaces erected in line, and connected at the top by a broad main tramway, with lesser ones branching to each furnace. But when Geordie came in view of them the first appeared to have vanished entirely.

He hurried down and soon reached the works, making at once for the crowd assembled within the gates, but keeping at a respectful distance from the remaining furnaces, and saw at once what had occurred.

The cheeseparating policy of the company that owned the works had resulted in a dire calamity. Owing to want of proper attention and repair, the first furnace, weakened by long-continued action, had burst, scattering the molten metal in all directions, though, fortunately, without loss of life, as the men had not yet resumed work after breakfast.

Such an accident was bad enough in itself, but was rendered doubly so by the storm. For, just as the burst occurred, and the furnace was tottering to its fall, a terrific rush of wind tore along the dell and seemed to exert its full impact right upon the falling brickwork, hurling it against the second furnace, and bringing down half of that as well.

All this Geordie had shouted into his ears by the men about him, and was told, further, that the first blast, in falling, had carried away not only its own tramway but that of the second blast as well, and, as this fell to the ground, it dragged with it the tramway of the third blast. In fact,

he was told, it was a wonder the whole works had not come down with a run.

'Any fellow hurt?' Geordie bellowed, all thoughts of Tim gone for a time.

'Ay, there's one poor chap up there now,' his neighbour replied, using his hands as a trumpet. 'Don't you see him?'

And then Geordie saw what he might have noticed before. High above their heads, suspended as it were in mid-air, hung or clung the form of a man, holding on to the side of the second furnace, and appearing ready at any moment to drop upon the mass of fiery metal beneath.

'Who is he?' shouted Geordie.

'Tim Snacker. Do you know him?' For Geordie's brows had contracted.

'Ay, I've heered on him,' he replied shortly.

There was the man he had come in search of, bound in a very short while to meet a death horrible to think of, but not a bit worse than he deserved, thought Geordie.

He was told that Tim—who was the general smith and fitter of the works—had been busy at one of the charging doors of the second furnace while the men were at their breakfast, and had been knocked over when the wreck of the first furnace carried away the tramway of the second. He had, however, managed to cling to the end of a broken beam and so save himself for the present.

'But he can't hang there long,' thought Geordie, not without a slight feeling of pity for his enemy.

Nothing could be done to save poor Tim, one of whose arms seemed to be broken, as it hung motionless and straight down over the side of the beam. He was half-lying, half-sitting on his little refuge, and had received a great cut on the side of his head, from which blood was flowing freely, the red drops falling with a hiss upon the hot metal below. Nothing could be done, for access from the third or fourth blast was impossible, and no kite would fly in such a wind, and Tim would drop from very weakness long before a ladder could be fixed against the side of No. 2 blast.

'No, there's nought can be done, Tim, my lad. Thou'rt bound for hell now,' and it almost seemed just to Geordie. 'Nought to be'—He paused, for his quick eye had discerned a possible way of relief.

Around the circumferences of the furnaces, and at heights of about five feet, bands of iron were passed, holding the brickwork together. The lengths of each band were fastened by large bolts, and a strong man, a very strong man, above the usual height too, might, with the aid of a good rope, gain the top of the third furnace by means of these bolts, and then jump to the second furnace, and so save Tim.

Geordie saw all this, and called himself a fool for being so quick in the 'uptake.'

'Let him be,' he muttered; 'he deserves it all.'

But he despised himself for the thought, and after a few seconds' struggle, could not refrain

from pointing out the possible way of relieving Tim from his dangerous position.

'Oh yes,' cried one of the crowd, 'it could be done, but where's the man what'll do it?'

He might well ask; for a slip or a fall meant certain death. And Tim was no great favourite anyhow. Who would do it, indeed?

The idea mooted by Geordie spread around, and many looked at him as if, having given birth to the idea, he it was who should carry it out. He tried to look away—it was none of his business; but wherever he turned, the crowd seemed to be expecting him to at once set about relieving Tim. A very strong man, and above the usual height. Yes, he was such. But then was not the man up there his bitter enemy? He would stir never a finger to help him.

'It 'ud comfort me to think I'd had just one kind word from you.'

Geordie started, and drops of perspiration rose on his forehead. The very words Liz had used. Why should they come back to his memory now, of all times? And he had withheld that kind word. Liz had gone to her death wanting it. Here, then, was an opportunity to make reparation. Liz was dead, but she had once loved Tim.

Yes or no? Which should it be? For about a hundred years, so it seemed to Geordie, he kept trying to persuade himself that Tim was only being meted with his own measure, while all the time those words of Liz kept buzzing and banging in his head. Which should it be? Mercy or justice, love or hate? Yes or no?

'Yes,' he shouted at last, 'I'll try it. Get a rope, lads.'

A slight cheer arose as the news spread. 'Hold on, Tim,' some one roared up to the man above, clinging to the bit of projecting iron; 'help's comin'.'

The rope was brought, and Geordie, with nothing but shirt and trousers upon him, began his perilous journey. By the aid of a short ladder he gained access to the roof of the low shed covering the tapping-hole and cinder-notch of the furnace. From that point he had to trust to Providence and the strength of his own muscles. He knew he was attempting no child's play; he was fully aware of the risks he ran; but for love of Liz he would save Tim—or die.

Standing on the top of the lean-to roof, he fastened one end of his rope securely to the lowermost bolt, and then passed the rope round the second bolt, five feet higher up, and pulled it taut. The slack rope was coiled loosely, and thrown over his right shoulder.

He then raised himself a couple of feet or more by means of the second bolt, passing his leg round the taut portion of the rope, resting part of his weight on his left arm and elbow, while with his right arm he threw a loop of rope over the next bolt. Pulling in the slack, and drawing it as taut as he could, he then hauled himself up till his feet rested on the bolt which had before given support to his elbow.

Thus he ascended the almost perpendicular face of the furnace-wall, every movement followed with strained attention by each individual in the crowd below. Once, when about thirty feet above the shed, the rope slipped off the bolt end, and he fell, scraping against the side of the

brickwork for about four feet. A shudder of apprehension ran through the crowd; but no sound came from them, as Geordie, though jarred in every bone by this accident, calmly set about regaining his lost point of vantage.

So, foot by foot, he went up, till the last band but one had been reached. Here he found, to his great dismay, that the bolt joining the pieces of the top band was not set vertically over the others, but so far to the right that it was quite impossible to reach it, though he cast his loop again and again. This was a bitter disappointment. Could he but reach the top band, he would have scaled the furnace, and have accomplished the worst part of his task. To make matters still more difficult, the space between the top band and the second was over eight feet.

By this time, also, he was growing exhausted. It had taken him almost twenty minutes to mount a little more than forty feet, and unless he could gain the top quickly the strain on his muscles would become too great, and he would have to give in, and own himself defeated.

He lowered himself to the next bolt, and, making a sling of the rope, rested there for a few minutes.

'Well done, lad, well done,' he heard some one in the crowd below call out; 'take your time and you'll win up yet.'

The words cheered and strengthened him, and put new courage into his heart. He would try once more to reach the top.

Standing on the third bolt, counting from the summit, he made two loops beneath the second, one long and one short. Placing one of his feet in the first, he raised himself about half-a-yard; the shorter loop gave him another half-yard; but left him still nearly two feet lower than the second band.

He was literally clinging to the furnace by tooth and nail, being too far below the bolt to get any support from it, or even to see it, for his face was pressed close to the brickwork. He felt about with his free foot for the bolt, and having found it, put the toe of his boot firmly on it, and then gradually raised himself, working his hands higher and higher, and taking advantage of every joint in the bricks.

The whole of his weight was now resting on the front of one foot; his only protection against the wind—fortunately he was on the lee side of the furnace—his finger-hold of the bricks; a sheer fall of fifty feet if he faltered or failed; and two feet above his head the top of the furnace.

He moved the palm of his right hand gradually higher and higher, fearing to lose one hold till secure of the next, while the sinews of his foot and leg seemed as if they would break any instant. Inch by inch his fingers crept up, without seeming to be anywhere nearer the top. His breathing was extremely painful; perspiration streamed from every pore; the beating of his heart almost choked him.

He would hold on till his hand had passed three more joints. Still the top was not reached. Two more, and then he must drop; his strength could last no longer.

Up and up his fingers crept, the skin worn and bleeding, the nails torn to the quick. The first

joint was reached and passed; the second also. Could he try one more? He did, and touched what infused herculean strength into his aching muscles. He touched the bottom edge of the last band. Three or four inches more, and his hand rested on top of the furnace.

His left hand quickly followed, and then he was able to change his weight to his other foot, and rest for a short while. Encouraged and strengthened by his success, he nerved himself for the last effort; raised himself by his hands till his head was above the flat top of the furnace, flung one arm forward and grasped a rod attached to the chimney, and then, with a final struggle, pulled the rest of his body safely over the edge.

A deep, low roar broke from the crowd at this; but the man on the furnace top did not hear it. There was a buzzing and a singing in his ears which shut out all outer sounds; he was seized with a terrible fit of trembling and vomiting; but he was *there*, with torn clothes, bleeding shins, bleeding knees and elbows, bleeding arms and hands. What matter that? Tim would be saved after all.

Geordie was so long in recovering that the men and women below grew anxious, as minute after minute passed, and yet no sign of his figure on the edge of the furnace. But at last they saw his head and shoulders appear, as he raised himself to his knees, and then his whole body, as he advanced to the edge of the brickwork.

Now he found he had to contend with a new element of danger. For up at that height, in such an exposed position and away from the shelter of the chimney, the wind whistled past his ears as if it would tear them off. It felt icy cold, too, striking upon his reeking skin, altogether unprotected save for his ragged shirt and trousers, worn to shreds during his perilous ascent.

Having with his eye measured the distance he had to jump in order to reach Tim, he fastened his rope to one of the chimney-rods, paid out about fifteen feet of it, and secured the rest tightly round his body. The broken beam to which Tim was still clinging was about a yard lower than the furnace top, and in order to reach him Geordie would have to spring a clear distance of ten feet or more. Fortunately, the furnace top was flat and free of obstacles, so that he would be able to gain a run of a few feet, and thus secure a slight impetus.

His preparations made, he stepped back to take the jump; but just as he neared the edge that horrible trembling seized him again. It balked him, and made him turn sick and giddy. A second time he tried, and again his heart failed him. He drew away once more and cowered shivering under the lee of the warm chimney. A third effort might have been successful but for a terrific blast of wind which blew him full against one of the chimney-rods.

Stunned, disheartened, and faint, he crawled to the edge of the furnace, and looked across to Tim, almost carried away by the awful gale roaring around him.

'Could you make the rope fast, Tim?' he shrieked; but the man, scarcely more than three yards away, only shook his head; he was too weak to speak.

'Can you catch it?' and Tim nodded.

'All right; catch it, and drop loose end to chaps below,' Geordie shouted again.

He unfastened the rope from his body, and made the spare portion into a firm knot. This he then swung round his head several times, and shot it out, as if from a sling, in the direction of the broken beam. The wind tossed it away as if it had been a feather. He tried again with the same result. Again and again he flung it out, and each time it fell short of its mark.

Every movement had been followed by those below, every failure to jump, and each renewed effort to cast the rope. The men stood still with folded arms and compressed lips, while the women clasped each other's hands. Not a sound came from them, so intense was their anxiety. And it was pitiful to watch the rough-haired terrier during all this excitement. He kept running backwards and forwards from the crowd to the foot of the ladder, uttering mournful little whines the while. Standing by the ladder, he would place one of his fore-paws on the bottom rung and half-raise the other, as if fully determined to climb after his master; or else he would sit on his tail and gaze up at the slowly-ascending figure, while his every muscle quivered with suppressed anxiety.

Failing to fling the rope over the beam, Geordie fastened it once more round his body and tried to jump for the fourth time, and for the fourth time his heart sickened. Yet the distance was such as he had cleared scores of times on the level. Do what he would, he found it impossible to keep back the thought that, if he missed his hold, he would whiz through the air and be dashed in pieces on the glowing iron below.

Then a bright thought occurred to a man in the crowd of sympathetic onlookers, the same man who had already encouraged him while ascending the furnace.

'Let's cheer him, lads!' this man cried out, and instantly 'Hooray! hooray! ho-o-o-r-a-y!' burst from each throat, as the men waved their caps and the women their aprons, the terrier also adding his voice to the general salute.

The wind bore up the cheering sounds to Geordie and restored his failing courage. Looking down at the sea of upturned faces, he cried out:

'Thanks, lads; I'll do it this time, you bet.'

He rose to his feet once more, stepped back a little, waited for a lull in the storm, and then, when it came, and with the echoes of those shouts still in his ears, sprang out into space just far enough to clutch the beam with both arms. Six inches less and he would have been lost.

Then what a roar burst from the crowd, when at last they saw Geordie sitting astride the same beam with Tim. They shouted, they shrieked, they bellowed in their joy. The men flung their caps in the air, and the wind immediately swept them far away; the women wept, and blessed Geordie in their hearts. Well done, indeed it was! and each began telling the other what a fine fellow Geordie was, and where did he come from; and what was his name; and who was he, anyhow?

Geordie's task was an easy one now. He fastened the rope carefully round Tim's body, first making a rough bandage of a piece of his shirt with which to bind up the wounded head,

and then lowered him gently down to those waiting to receive him below.

The beam was immediately above the still hot iron from the burst furnace, so that he had to swing Tim backwards and forwards a bit, till he was within reach of the hands outstretched to take him. But so eager were they, and so suddenly did they snatch at him as he was just on the point of swinging back again, that they pulled the rope clean out of Geordie's hands.

He and Tim had changed places! Still, it was one thing to be up there with whole limbs, but quite another to have a smashed head and a broken arm.

So elated was Geordie at his success in saving Tim, that he almost laughed at this second accident, though at first he had uttered an exclamation of dismay.

'Tie something to end of rope and swing it in,' he shouted.

This was done, and the rope swung in and out, but not near enough to reach him by a yard. There was nothing for it but to jump at the rope as it swung to him, and catch it that way.

He waited till it came towards him again, sprang out, clutched the rope, and descended like lightning to the ground, giving vent, as he did so, to a yell that would have excited the envy of an aboriginal Fijian. For the rope felt red hot in his hands, and when he was safely down and looked at his palms, he found he had left the skin of them on the rope.

The men and women closed round him, shook his arms almost out of their sockets—he wouldn't let them touch his hands—clapped him on the back, and in every way they possibly could tried to show their admiration of his heroic deed. And if the rough-haired terrier did not break his spine it was not for want of jumping high enough and falling down again, all-abroad, as he made frantic efforts to leap up to Geordie's shoulders. But the hero of the hour took all their congratulations very quietly. He alone knew with what far different feelings he had sought Tim that morning.

A few more words and this rambling relation of an episode in the earlier life of Geordie Donce is ended.

Tim Snacker's injuries were very serious indeed. The crushed arm and broken head would have tried the strongest man, but were too much for one of Tim's unsteady habits. The mischief had also been aggravated by his long exposure.

He was carried to a cottage near by, and lingered for a little over two days. Early on the morning of the second word was brought to Geordie that Tim was dying, and wished to speak to him. He went, if not quite willingly, at least without delay, and soon reached the cottage where his late enemy was lying.

As he crossed the threshold the doctor came out of the dying man's room.

'You are just in time,' he said; 'he's almost gone. Has been asking for you all night. Wants to see you alone.'

So Geordie entered the room very quietly, bending his head to avoid striking the low lintel, and closed the door softly behind him.

'Is that you, Geordie?' those in the outer room heard the broken man ask, in a weak voice.

'Ay, Tim, I've come,' Geordie replied, in a kindly tone.

'It's getting very dark, lad, and I wanted'—but what it was Tim wanted none but Geordie ever knew, as the closing door shut off the rest.

Nor did any one ever know what passed between the two men in that last interview. All that was certain was that it was Geordie who closed Tim's eyes, and that when, three days later, a little procession set out from the cottage and took the road leading to the churchyard where Liz and her child lay buried, the chief mourner was a big furnaceman, who walked heavily with a stoop in his shoulders, and wore a brown fur waistcoat, while close to his heels a rough-haired terrier trotted with great soberness.

ZANZIBAR SLAVERY.

By Lieutenant STUART D. GORDON, R.N.

RECENT legislation on the part of the Government has declared the legal status of slavery in Zanzibar and Pemba to be abolished. But that it does not follow that slavery itself will cease to exist is apparent to those who have lived for any considerable time among the subjects of the Sultan of Zanzibar (both Arab and native) in the different parts of his domains.

The writer having been, for some five years, actively employed in the suppression of the slave trade; and having subsequently lived in Zanzibar, Mombasa, Lamu, &c., and at other places up-country and on the West as well as the East Coast of Africa, ventures to think that, as he has such an intimate acquaintance with the subject (possessing the additional advantage of a knowledge of the language), it might be interesting if he were to advance for the consideration of the readers of this magazine one or two points which do not appear to have gained the attention they claim in the recent parliamentary debates, but upon the satisfactory settlement of which depends the practical effectiveness of this latest decree. In his treatment of the subject, it will be the writer's endeavour to avoid, as much as possible, its political aspect; but rather, by the presentation of facts which have come under his notice during his stay among these people, to perhaps throw light upon a matter of such vital importance.

The two principal questions which suggest themselves are:

1. Is it possible, by the passing of a bill in parliament, to abolish slavery, as practised in Zanzibar and Pemba? 2. How are the newly-emancipated slaves to gain their livelihood?

It is not sufficient to cry, 'Here are thousands of human beings held in bondage by their fellow-men: slavery is a blot upon the face of the earth; therefore let freedom be declared!' There are many other features of the case which have to be considered before such a praiseworthy intention can be carried into effect. Race, power, ability for work, inclination, tradition, and above all, religion, are a few.

Before a thorough grasp of the question can be obtained, it is imperative that we should first have some knowledge of the slaves themselves: where they come from, how they are obtained, and the life they lead in bondage.

Tanganyika, and the district of the Great Lakes generally, is the 'happy hunting-ground' where the raw slave is secured. This operation is effected in many ways; but always through the employment of force. Stray natives may be kidnapped, or—which is practically the same—deceived into accepting 'temporary' employment at the hands of the Arab; but the principle of power, 'might is right,' invariably rules the manner of their capture and their retention in servitude. One of the most commonly practised methods of supplying the continuous demand for free labour is by raiding.

The slave-raiders having organised a caravan, leave the coast laden with such articles as can be used for the purposes of barter or bribery—cloth, cotton-stuffs, beads, brass and copper wire, &c. Their chief impedimenta, however, consist of guns and ammunition—the number of flint-locks frequently exceeding by many hundreds the people in the caravan. The Arab leaders have already made it their business to find out the position of a couple of towns or villages within a short journey of each other whose inhabitants are unfriendly—have a feud, in fact. To the smaller and weaker of these two the marauders betake themselves; when by gifts, bribes, and promises of plunder—as well as revenge upon their enemies—they have no difficulty whatever in swelling their ranks by the addition of every able-bodied man in the place—even women and children sometimes accompanying them. Then it is that the large quantities of guns and ammunition are requisitioned, each native being armed by their new champions.

The next morning before daylight witnesses the larger town surrounded by the unexpected foe, and ere they are well aware of it the inhabitants are made prisoners—unless indeed they are killed fighting for liberty. Then the spoil is divided as previously stipulated, the Arabs taking all things human except the aged and infirm, whilst the natives sack the town, wreaking their vengeance upon the helpless few of their enemies remaining. The long lengths of chain, iron collars, and slave-sticks are now brought forth, the captives secured, and the caravan pursues its course, or starts on the return journey. As often as not, however, if the 'bag' is disappointingly small, the Arabs will turn upon their late companions-in-arms and enslave them also.

This mode of capture, with its attendant sufferings, and the subsequent march to the coast, are in truth, as a general rule, the only absolutely cruel phases of African slavery; and, as to the march, the tortures the captives are compelled to endure have been greatly exaggerated by well-intentioned folk at home, whilst the oft-repeated story of the laggards being shot

down occurs but seldom; and when it is remembered that the alternative treatment is that the captives would be left behind to die in the desert, one can but say that, in the circumstances, the former is the more merciful of the two courses.

Throughout the consideration of this question, it is of the first importance to bear in mind that to the slave-raider—as also to the owner afterwards—each slave represents so many dollars. It is plain, therefore, that unnecessary cruelty would not be used, at all events is not practised, in actual slavery; for of all men under the sun—although lavish in his hospitality, and in no circumstances parsimonious—none has a keener appreciation of the value of money than the Arab. Marching beneath an African sun is at the best of times a severe hardship, and it goes without saying that for these wretched natives chained together, their necks in slave-sticks or collar, the sufferings to be borne must inevitably be dreadful.

On their arrival at the coast they are most generally housed and fed for a time, and when sufficiently recovered from the effects of their long tramp, some are shipped to the Persian Gulf and others run across to Pemba or Zanzibar at night-time in small dhows, or even in fishing canoes, so anxious are the owners to avoid the man-of-war's boats which continually patrol the channel between the islands and the mainland. It is during this term of resting at the seaport (e.g. Kilwa, Pangani, Dar-es-salaam) that the actual selling of the slaves usually takes place; the owners of plantations sending their agents into the town to effect the necessary purchases.

Duly landed say in Pemba, the new-comers are distributed among the houses or huts in which live the other slaves; and the first thing in the morning, immediately after dawn, sees them at work in the fields or spice groves. Here it will be well to note that assuredly the only profitable labour of which the raw slave may possess a knowledge must necessarily be of the agricultural kind, his existence hitherto having been mainly spent in the task of producing his daily bread from out of the ground. This being the case, the master, by his purchase, adds so many labourers to his establishment, every one of whom is already trained in the work which will be required of him; the only thing necessary to teach them being the art of picking cloves.

So year in and year out, except on Fridays and feast-days, the negro works for the Arab, who in return gives him a roof, food, clothes—such as he wears—and, when he reaches man's estate, a wife from among his female slaves. True, the offspring of the marriage all become the property of the master; yet he in turn is bound by law to have them educated in the rudiments of knowledge and religion.

And now we come to the crux of the whole question. Children born in slavery in any Mohammedan country are naturally brought up in the faith of Islam, one of the first principles they are taught being that God created the black man to serve the white (Arab). We have thus both Arab and negro implicitly believing that slavery is the divine ordinance of the Almighty. It naturally follows that the new decree abolish-

ing the legal status of slavery will be met with opposition, not only on account of its being contrary to the custom and traditions of centuries, but also because it is in conflict with the religious belief of both master and slave alike, and is, in their eyes, thwarting the commands of Allah himself.

In these circumstances it is more than doubtful that Zanzibar slavery can be completely abolished—at all events for some considerable time to come. Perhaps the altered conditions under which it will be carried on will necessitate its not being so open and declared, and may even modify the system itself; yet still there will remain slavery in some shape or form.

But, it may be argued, if the penalties attached to the possession of slaves be made sufficiently severe, slavery perforce must disappear. The reply is, that, with the exception of the few isolated cases of harsh or cruel masters, those natives now in bondage will, from choice, remain as they are. Nor is the reason for this difficult to discover. Were they granted their liberty to-morrow, they would not know what to do for a living; they could not support themselves. In many instances has the writer had the refusal of freedom from these men's own lips. They are fed, clothed, housed, and cared for as—to use their own expression—'children of one father' (master). For the masters who do not possess the regard of their slaves, the fear they are held in by their unfortunate serfs, together with the well-known native cunning of the Arab, are quite sufficient to baffle any steps that may be taken to put free labour in place of slavery.

Even as things are at present, there are many masters who pay some of their elder slaves; while nearly all permit them to hire themselves out as porters to caravans, &c., during the slack season. In this latter case, although the slave, it must be borne in mind, is absolutely the master's property, it is the universal custom that he shall be allowed to retain a certain portion of the wages he earns; thus is his master, though indirectly, paying him money. Yet, still arguing by the conditions which exist at the present time, the owner would be perfectly justified in refusing the slave permission to work for others; or, having granted it, might with all equity keep the whole product of the man's labour for himself.

In connection with this part of the subject, it should be insisted on that the African slave who is born in slavery is remarkable for his fealty to his master; indeed it is analogous to the allegiance to his Queen possessed by every Englishman. Born under the conditions described, he, the slave, recognising that everything he has, and is, comes from the same source, is it not but natural that he should hold his master in regard? Add to this that the religion in which he has been brought up teaches him that it was but for the purpose of ministering to the comfort of the Arab that he was ever brought into this world, and it will be readily seen that the slave himself will, in many instances, be as strong an opponent to the institution of the new régime as the largest slave-owner in Zanzibar or Pemba.

Thus there is the question if the greater part of the slaves accept their freedom, how are they to gain their livelihood? Not one of them has a

knowledge of any trade whatsoever; and, even were it otherwise, the industries have yet to be developed in their country before they can be employed. Then are we still to have the slave selling himself back once more into slavery, and after spending in debauchery the few dollars he obtained by the transaction, returning of his own free-will to his old, or it may be a new, master? Doubtless he will have to do so a little less openly than he does now, because slavery will not be recognised by law; but that many of the Waswahili will shortly look back with longing regret to the days of their bondage the writer, for one, feels confident.

But, it may be urged, these men understand the work of the plantation; they can do the same work as that in which they have hitherto been engaged; the only difference being that they will now be free men, drawing wages for their labour. Yes; but there will be another difference and a great one. It is more than probable that in a very short time the owners of the plantations will either make some secret arrangement with the men whereby the latter will again be virtually enslaved, or they will cease to grow cloves—or anything else, for that matter—when there would be no employers of labour.

It is hardly to be expected that this country should subsidise the owners of these estates. What then is to be done? There is certainly a way to prevent the deadlock that would undoubtedly ensue in the circumstances here foreshadowed; and one which will, no doubt, be recognised and laid hold of by some of our enterprising commercial community. It is that the clove plantations should be leased or bought from the present holders; when, even with paid labour, the cultivation of this prolific soil, with trees already bearing, would be found a profitable investment, if run on strictly business principles, as would then be the case. This of course it would be idle to expect from the aristocratic Arab, who, content to follow in the footprints of his prehistoric ancestors, asks but that his immediate comfort should be studied and luxurious appetites satisfied.

If some such scheme as the above be not worked concurrently with the emancipation of the slaves, these miserable men must either starve or steal. So, simultaneously with, or following close upon, the propagation of the decree there will have to be laid the foundation-stones of a workhouse and a prison.

The gigantic truth stares us in the face, that to abolish the slave-trade altogether there must be a complete revolution in the very natures of both Arab and negro. And so stupendous a task is this that it is excusable if those who really know these races have grave doubts of the success that will attend whatever measures are taken, unless a way be provided whereby the newly-freed slave shall be able to earn his living by honest toil.

No such means now exist; but the onus of providing it clearly rests with those who have been instrumental in influencing the government to pass the late bill. Let these not halt halfway, but show they have the courage of their convictions; otherwise the compulsory and simultaneous releasing of this large number of slaves

will, instead of a blessing, prove a curse to those they have striven to benefit; and the fair islands of Zanzibar and Pemba will be transformed into a hotbed of vice and misery.

THE RENEGADO.

By GEORGE G. FARQUHAR.

It was most unfortunate that the periodic revolution should break out so soon after I arrived at Señor Ardití's *estancia*, for thereby my long-anticipated sport amid 'fresh woods and pastures new' again became but matter for regretful dreams. That is the worst of these Central American ten-acre states—you never know, from one day to another, who may suddenly start up and proclaim himself President; and until the question is satisfactorily settled, things are apt to grow a trifle exciting. However, I should not so much have objected to other people's indulging in a little promiscuous shooting if their enjoyment had not happened to interfere sadly with mine.

'All this rumpus to secure a berth not worth a hundred a year in solid comfort,' growled I disgustedly. 'Fangh—it's sheer idiocy!'

'Hush—hush, *amigo mio*,' interposed Señor Ardití, glancing round apprehensively; 'you must not speak like that. It is dangerous—if not to you, to me.'

'I forgot myself,' I answered humbly.

'For your sake, too, I am anxious. True, you are English, and a non-combatant; yet if you were found with a gun in your possession, however innocent your intentions, some hot-blooded *capitan de guardia* might choose to regard you as a rebel caught red-fingered, and even your nationality would not save you then. Still, while you are my guest, so long as you act discreetly, I think I may confidently assure you that you will be unharmed. Nor, Señor Norreys, do I imagine this trouble can last for many days. A week or two at most, and it will all have blown over.'

'I hope so, heartily,' replied I. 'I'm fidgeting for a shot at a puma or jaguar, or even at the cotton-tails and—'

'Patience—patience, señor. I have reason to believe that President Diaz is awake to the plans and movements of his opponent, Don Miguel, and is prepared to meet him with effective strategy. Myself, I suspect the *alcalde* of San Campos to be the divulger of Don Miguel's secrets—a shrewd, ambitious man, with the boldness of a peccary and the cunning of a coyote. He is ostentatiously the ally of the insurgents, and therefore to him I ascribe the part of traitor to—'

'Really, a most amiable crew altogether,' said I, choking back a yawn—for I never could interest myself in foreign politics. 'Let's adjourn to the veranda for a smoke.'

During the next few days I confined myself to the *casa* and indigo-growing estates of my friend. At one time I thought of making a dash for the nearest seaport and getting out of the country altogether; but a wholesome respect for my skin stayed my feet. What hostilities there had been hitherto—mere skirmishes only—had taken place among the hills to the north, the said hills lying between Señor Ardití's house and the ocean. Personal danger is about the last thing in the

world I cared to court, and at once I set down this move as being a woeful sight too risky.

Towards the end of the week, while exercising a restive barb on the neighbouring *medanos*, Señor Ardití was unseated by the vicious brute and flung heavily to the ground, the fall fracturing one of the bones of his fore-arm. I bandaged the limb in splints as well as I could; but since my knowledge of surgical work is of the crudest, I greatly feared lest complications should set in if the injury were not attended to properly and speedily. Now, the only individual thereabouts who bore any reputation at all as a medico or bone-setter was a certain Padre Felipe of the Dolores Mission at Las Portas—and Las Portas lay a good four miles distant. Still, there was nothing else for it; so leaving Señor Ardití to the care of his majordomo, I rode out myself post-haste to the mission.

'Padre Felipe started this morning for San Campos,' said that member of the brotherhood who answered my inquiry. 'He was summoned to a fever-stricken peon in that town. No, señor; assuredly he will not return to-day.'

Of a truth, this was indeed pleasant hearing—San Campos being quite three leagues away northward! Yet here again could I perceive no alternative. Not a soul on this side of the town knew more than I myself of the surgeon's art; whereas at San Campos, even if the padre failed me, doubtless I might be able to command the services of some equally competent practitioner.

With the twin cones of Agualaxi for guide, I urged my horse with both voice and boot-heel to his topmost pace. The bullock-cart track wound along by prickly-pear hedges at first, through a tangled belt of jungle, and afterwards across an uneven plain overgrown with sawgrass, and interspersed with clumps of trees and chaparral.

Perhaps two-thirds of the distance between Las Portas and San Campos had been covered, when I heard a prolonged outcry away to my left, and looking thitherwards I saw a sight that caused me to pull up abruptly. From round one of the afore-mentioned palmetto clumps there sprang a man of middle age, lean and sapless as a lath, flying for dear life from half-a-dozen howling 'greasers' who, with glistening knives and machetes, hounded close upon his heels. One of them, having distanced his fellows, was already within striking range.

'A muerte—à muerte!' yelled he, and his arm went up for the blow.

Swerving suddenly aside, the fugitive bent low and thrust out his leg. As his pursuer stumbled over it, the other added weight to the fall by a deft stroke upon the nape of the scoundrel's neck. The man shot impetuously forward, head-foremost, into the bole of a silk-cotton tree. If ever human scone was broken in this world, assuredly that fellow's was. The agile movement so stirred my admiration and sympathy, from the first enlisted on behalf of the hunted man, that I could not repress a wild 'Bravo!' In a moment he had dashed alongside me—a swart, gasping, palpitating bundle of bones; his lank, leathery cheeks working like a smith's bellows; his small dark eyes aflame.

'The cowards—the beasts!' he cried vehemently. 'Señor, you will help me? Sacristi—la canalla, la canalla! But I'll be even with the pack of them yet!'

Not waiting for answer or invitation, he swung himself easily into the saddle behind me. As the mare broke into a lumbering trot under her double burden, I was startled by a hurried clatter of hoofs in our rear; looking back in alarm, I discerned eight or ten *caballeros* bursting round the hillock in full pelt after us. Several of them, I noticed, wore a dingy blue uniform—the distinctive garb of Don Miguel's partisans!

Not until that instant did I dream that the business in hand had relation to other than an ordinary personal squabble, at worst an attempt at robbery or vengeance; but now the affair assumed a totally different complexion. By a most malevolent turn of circumstance I had got myself inextricably mixed up in the national imbroglio—an entanglement which, above all things else, I was especially anxious to avoid. Yet here was I—with no manner of interest in the struggle—cast into the very thick of the political discussion.

Just before we gained the partial shelter of a belt of mesquite-brush, there came the report of carbines and the zip-zip of the bullets holing the turf close behind us. No mistake, I felt anything but cheerful over the prospect. There could be but one issue to a race of this sort. Had I alone been upon the mare's back, handicapped and badly blown as she was, there might have been a chance of escape for me—a slender chance only maybe, yet tangible enough to have endowed me with pluck to make a bold dash for it. But the pair of us!

A similar notion, apparently, had struck my companion, for no sooner had we galloped into the open again than he slipped his arm swiftly round my waist and tumbled me clear of the saddle. The fall half-stunned me; dazed and stupid I lay there, unable adequately to realise the devilish nature of the trick he had played off on me—so little so, indeed, that I recollect staring blankly after his half-retreating figure, and vaguely hoping that he might even yet get safely away to San Campos. But his treachery availed him nothing. His pursuers drew up with him, hand over hand, firing as they rode. A ricochet shot brought his horse to its knees, the brute staggering up and floundering a few paces farther before finally rolling over. Its rider, seeing the futility of resistance, yielded himself a passive prisoner.

They led him back to where I stood—one of the mestizoes having stationed himself beside me as guard—and together captors and captives jogged back by the way we had come.

'Señor,' murmured my fellow-prisoner, with an air of magnanimity rather than of apology; 'for the extreme step which my necessity forced me to take, I tender you my sincerest regrets. I was wrong; I was ungenerous. Señor, I crave your pardon.'

To this bombast I vouchsafed no reply; words of mine were utterly unequal to the occasion. But my silent disdain in nowise troubled the speaker; shrugging his shoulders resignedly, he straightway fell into glib chat with our escort. From the wag of their tongues, I gathered that he was none other than the Señor Valdo, alcalde of San Campos, who, according to my host and to fact, had been playing fast and loose this many a day between the President and the insurgent leader. Somehow, his duplicity had come to

light at last, and it was while bent upon evading the dire penalty of his misdeeds that he had been surprised and run down by Don Miguel's ruffians. For the *alqueria* wherein Don Miguel had temporarily established his headquarters we were now bound.

An hour's trudge brought us to the place—a squat, winged, rambling structure of adobe brick. A motley rabble thronged the *patio*—jesting, smoking, and jabbering in lazy abandon—perhaps to the number of three hundred altogether, here and in the out-buildings. There was little pretence at discipline; neither patrol, sentry, nor guard whatever. Señor Valdo bore himself nonchalantly, even jauntily, as we filed through the ribald crowd into the house. I really believe I might have found it in my conscience to admire him even then if I had been able to spare thought for anything outside my own plight.

Awaiting us in an inner room sat Don Miguel himself—a wizened, sallow-skinned little man—who, having already been apprised of the seizure, had apparently resolved upon both judgment and sentence in hot haste. Crossing over from the group of attendant officers, he planted himself in front of us, his feet set far apart, his beady eyes scintillating viciously.

'*Mil cumplimientos, señores!*' said he, with assumed pleasantry. 'It was a brave race, no doubt, but the last that either of you will ever run. For you, señor, whom I have not had the felicity of meeting before—he was speaking to me now—I have directed a firing-party to hold itself in readiness. An open foe I ever hold in high esteem, and for such an one a soldier's death can have no terrors'—

I broke in with hasty explanations. My part in the unfortunate affair had been wholly guiltless—the outcome of pure accident and coincidence; I was an Englishman and a non-belligerent; Señor Arditi would answer for the truth of my assertions—and much more to a like effect.

'*Buenos, señor,*' Don Miguel interrupted blandly, 'all this may be as you say. Yet I am told that many Americanos have placed themselves under the command of the tyrant. How am I to know you are not one of these meddling Gringos. *Quien sabe?* You do not deny that you were seeking to aid the flight of a deserter—of a scoundrel whose life is ten times forfeit, a betrayer of his friends, an enemy of'—

'Pshut—enough of that!' interposed Señor Valdo scornfully. 'I, at least, will not snivel for mercy; I, at least, will bare my breast for the bullets of your hirelings without a tremor. I, señor—I will die like a *soldado!*'

'A *soldado*, nimbler with his legs than with his wits!' put in Don Miguel, laughing immoderately. 'There was no talk of shooting you, señor alcalde. Carramba, no! Such supple limbs as yours were meant for the fandango—and dance they shall, *amigo mio!*'

'Not that!' cried Señor Valdo shrilly, with a catch in his breath. 'It is infamous! The death of a cut-throat—of a base *asesino!*'

'Sant' Geronimo, the man jests with his neck in the noose!' blurted Don Miguel sardonically. 'But I have spoken. Capitan Perez, conduct the renegado out into the patio, throw a lariat over the magnolia there, and hang—hang—hang the reptile!'

Ere the words were well uttered, Señor Valdo had wrenched himself free from the grip of his custodians, and dealt the insurgent commander a terrific blow full on the mouth with his fist. Don Miguel bowled over like a nine-pin. Choking and spluttering in agonised rage, he scrambled to his feet and bounced over to where the alcalde, speedily overborne and secured by the soldiers, now stood smiling in grim content. Before head or tail could be made of the little Spaniard's incoherent ravings, before one could well hazard a guess at his intentions, he had pulled out his revolver and sent a ball crashing through Señor Valdo's brain.

I recall it all now as vividly as when it befell—the bare, whitewashed room in the farm; the swart assemblage that peopled it; the bruised and bleeding visage of Don Miguel; the ghastly sight of the dead body as it was dragged away for burial. Ugh, it gives me the shudders to think of it even at this late day! Yet I recollect experiencing a sense akin to joy, in that Don Miguel had been craftily cheated of the full vengeance he had promised himself, and the alcalde saved from that last detested degradation of the gibbet. A knave as dauntless as unscrupulous; in truth, a brave scoundrel—requiescat!

Perhaps Don Miguel had had a sufficiency of blood-letting for one day—though I find it hard to credit him with any such lack of appetite—for he issued no further orders as to my disposal just then; but, instead, turned to whispered colloquy with his officers. From the snatches of talk that reached me—'Inglaterra,' 'las represalias,' 'ley internacional'—I concluded that certain of his council were of a mind to deal leniently with me, nor was I loth to back them up with my own reiterated protests of innocence and good faith.

In the end, after much harangue and puffing of cigars, it was resolved to hold me in duress for the present, and accordingly I was marched off to a cupboard-like *camara* in the rear of the house, the door being shut and locked upon me. Completely unstrung, limp, and exhausted, I flung myself into a corner, and set about anathematising the ill-happened current of events that had brought me to this sorry pass.

In the midst of my bitter tirades there came the sharp sound of a gun-shot; immediately it was followed by others, by a regular fusillade, by the bawling of hasty commands, by the scurrying of feet in the corridors, the clatter of steel, a babel of raucous voices, and all the confused tumult of an army caught napping by the enemy. Above the clamour rose a cry that sent the blood tingling through my veins.

'Viva el Presidente—Viva el Presidente Diaz!'

The press of conflict drew nearer minute by minute. The insurgents, getting the worst of it, were falling back upon the shelter of the farmstead. I was exultant. Now, by peering through the narrow slit that did duty for window in my *carcel*, I caught spasmodic glimpses of the strife—figures in dirty blue flitting from tree-trunk to tree-trunk, ever in the direction of the house; shadows in gray, with red sashes worn bandolier fashion—the president's soldiery—advancing steadily and surely, pouring in a hot fire that bid fair soon to make of the retreat a demoralised rout. A few stray bullets spattered against the walls of the *alqueria*, but I was too fascinated to

heed the warning; not until a missile, more minatory than the rest, snipped a fragment off the window-sill did I judge it wise to duck down, and await the outcome of the attack with what composure I could muster.

Nor had I long while to wait. As I afterwards learned, Don Miguel had been killed early in the action, and his dispirited supporters, thus deprived of leader, retained small stomach for further fighting—indeed, most of them were quite eager now to eat their principles and cast their votes in favour of the opposition candidate. The campaign, both military and political, was at an end.

Eventually, the victors entering into full possession of the building, I was freed from my prison-house, and brought before the triumphant president. After hearing my story, he abundantly condoled with me upon the scurvy treatment to which I had been subjected by his late rival, and furthermore, of his own accord, suggested that one of his surgical staff should accompany me, with an escort for our protection, to Señor Arditi's *casa*. And here I may as well make mention of Señor Arditi's firm-rooted conviction that, but for the skill and care of this medico, he would never have pulled through at all.

Subsequently I heard it bruited about that the train of events, culminating in the detection and death of the alcalde, was attributable to the initiative of President Diaz himself—that, in short, having no further use for a tool whose cunning and ambition might prove an insecure guarantee of future loyalty, he had deliberately taken measures to rouse suspicions of the truth in Don Miguel's breast. Personally, I turned a deaf ear to all such calumnies. Since that day I have had several opportunities of gauging his Excellency's character for myself—being more than once entertained by him in the Casa Blanca itself—and I invariably found him as courteous, urbane, and genial an old dago as one would drop across in a lifetime. Touching one of his accomplishments, I can speak with express assurance, for my knowledge of it was acquired in the best of all schools, and at a pretty cost to my pocket. Briefly put, it amounts to this—that no defter hand at euchre or monte ever yet fingered cards in either of the two Americas—and lived.

A RUINED COTTAGE.

THE roofless walls stand open to the sky,

The nettles grow where once the firelight played

Upon the hearthstone, and beneath the shade

Of flowering hemlocks, loathly creatures lie.

Ah me! the place is but a memory

Of hands that tried to work, and lips that prayed

In accents vain and weak, for rest and aid:

Till Death the Healer heard the bitter cry.

The tangled roses grow beside the door,

And when the March winds blow across the land,

There dances in the breeze a joyous band

Of yellow lilies; yet no springs restore

The vanished hopes and faces. Evermore

Silent, deserted, will these ruins stand.

C. G.

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GUIDEBOOKS OLD AND NEW.

ACCORDING to Hazlitt, one of the 'pleasanteest things in the world is going a journey;' but the fellow says further that 'I like to go myself. I can enjoy society in a room, but out of doors nature is company enough for me.' In this R. L. Stevenson was in hearty accord with him. This poetical philosopher was perfectly happy with the clear blue sky over his head, the green turf beneath his feet, 'a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking.' This is like Bernard of Clairvaux journeying in the neighbourhood of Geneva, who was so enraptured by heavenly meditation that he did not see the beautiful lake at his feet. Lord Bacon's hint to the young traveller 'to carry with him some card or book describing the country where he travelled, which will be a good key to his inquiry,' is more practical. There might be some difficulty in doing this in Lord Bacon's time, but none in these days of the multiplication and excellence of the guidebook.

The traveller by express train may find Bradshaw sufficient; but the cyclist, pedestrian, or he who travels for pleasure or profit, loves and lingers over and uses his Murray, Black, Baedeker, Baddeley, or useful local guide, and comes home inspired from viewing picturesque plains, winding rivers, old castles, and battlefields, to read up the 'biography' of each, and so to make their history and romance or commonplace facts a possession for ever. This is by far the pleasanter way of drinking in knowledge. Stewing in a classroom has its place, but here pleasure and profit meet together, and so the traveller is lifted up to a higher plane of intelligence. In commenting on new editions of Murray's guides, the *Edinburgh Review* remarked that 'more, we are convinced, may be learned of the progress and the changes which have built up this England of ours, and a far deeper insight gained into the real life of the past, by a "field" study of the country, than by the profoundest lectures of the most learned professor.' The same applies to continental travel,

or a journey farther afield. And what memories a row of old guidebooks can conjure up!

O love, what hours were thine and mine
In lands of palm and southern pine;
In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and maize, and vine.

Sir Walter Scott's genius never lost the impress of early pedestrian tours and excursions. John Ruskin had his eye and mind trained by accompanying his father and mother in long summer rides in a postchaise about rural England, and thus 'saw nearly all the noblemen's houses in England in reverent and healthy delight of un-covetous admiration.' No wonder he was afterwards so hard upon railways. The impressions of such travellers of genius when set down make excellent and stimulating and 'animated' guidebooks. But these impressions lack the practical everyday details of which the traveller is in want. Still, much may be gained from a perusal of the letters of Thomas Gray the poet to Wharton, or of Beattie, from Scotland and the North of England. They show that dawning love for natural scenery which culminated in Scott. After seeing the best scenery in the neighbourhood of Pitlochry, Gray exclaims: 'Since I saw the Alps, I have seen nothing sublime till now.' Dr Johnson in his famous tour showed little sense of the picturesque. William Cobbett on his Scottish and English tours writes strongly and warmly in praise of what he likes and just as strongly expresses his dislikes. Such books as Borrow's *Wild Wales*, the journeyings of William and Mary Howitt to remarkable and unremarkable places, Longfellow's *Poems of Places*, and the gossiping volumes of American literary men, of which the best are Irving's *Sketch Book*, Willis's *Pencilings*, and the volumes by Hawthorne, Emerson, and Holmes are worthy of mention in this connection. But probably the best journal of a tour ever written in this way is that of Dora Wordsworth.

William and Dorothy Wordsworth made a memorable six weeks' tour in Scotland in the autumn of 1803, the year after the poet's marriage. The narrative of this journey is set down by Dora

Wordsworth in prose which is sometimes more descriptive and poetical than her brother's poetry. One wonders how far they were fortified with guidebooks in their journey of over six hundred miles in an Irish car, with a horse now jibing and backing over a bank, or walking all too leisurely. The ground they covered was well chosen, being from Grasmere to Carlisle, then by Longtown, Annan, Dumfries, and Lanark to Glasgow. Next by Dumbarton they had a peep at the picturesque scenery of Loch Lomond, and turned by Arrochar to Inveraray, on to Dalmailly, Ballachulish, Tyn-drum, Killin, Kenmore, and Blair-Athole. This was their furthest north. We find them crossing the lonely moor round Amulree to Crieff, then on to Loch Earn by the route which is to be profaned by the railway; next to Callander and the Trossachs (which was thus known and famous ere the issue of Scott's *Lady of the Lake*), then across the Border, taking Peebles, the vale of Tweed to Melrose, Jedburgh, Hawick, and Langholm on the way back to Carlisle. We commend this journal to the pedestrian or railway traveller. Though Wordsworth did not write the journal of this tour, he was afterwards author of a guide to the English Lakes.

The traveller who leant on the map of that part of 'Great Britain called Scotland,' published by Herman Moll in 1714, was leaning on a broken reed. The country is divided into territories, not counties; the towns of Selkirk and Peebles are noted, but not the counties; Galashiels appears as Caldsheels, and Melrose as Melrey; Greenlaw is Grinla; Dumfries, Dumfriesis; and St Abb's Head, St Ebbshead; while Cromarty is conveniently gathered round the Cromarty Firth. Appended are some useful facts, with some fiction. Loch Lomond is said to be 'famous for its floating islands, its fish without fins, and being *tempestuous in a calm*.' In Iona 'is St Ouran's church, famous for the burying-place of eight kings of Norway, forty-eight kings of Scotland, four of Ireland, and many other persons of distinction.' If things were properly managed there would be no need, we are told, to go to Norway for wood or to Newfoundland for fish, as Scotland would be quite equal to all demands. The inhabitants of St Kilda are two hundred in number, and we are told they commonly have 'about two thousand solan-geese in their storehouses in a year,' or two a week for each inhabitant. There is a reproduction of this curious work by Mr R. S. Shearer, bookseller, Stirling.

Of early guides, the *Anglic Notitia* of Edward Chamberlayne, first printed in 1668, went through forty separate editions. John Ogilby's English road-book *Britannia* appeared first in folio in 1675 (fancy a folio guidebook to-day!), but afterwards in 8vo, and gave each main line of road and distance. In 1726 the Rev. James Brome, rector of Cheriton, Kent, published the result of three years of travel; and Thomas Pennant, whose works are still readable, began his tour in 1769, when Scotland was, as he says, 'as little known as Kamschatka.' Paterson's *British Itinerary* was

published in 1776 as 'a new and accurate description of the direct and principal roads of Great Britain,' and passed through fifteen editions before the author's death in 1820. It formed the companion to many a posting journey, and the last edition appeared in 1840, just when railways had emerged. John Cary's *New Itinerary*, published in 1798, gave place to his *British Traveller*, which was in an 11th edition in 1828.

At the beginning of an industrious literary and commercial career, William and Robert Chambers did not a little for the topography of Scotland. They jointly compiled a large *Gazetteer of Scotland*, while William Chambers wrote the *Book of Scotland*, and later on a little work on *Peebles and its Neighbourhood, with a Run on the Peebles Railway*, which owed so much to him. It was an excellent contribution to Scottish antiquities and topography, and the forerunner of his more elaborate *History of Peeblesshire*, a model county history. The *Picture of Scotland*, by Robert Chambers, was published by W. Tait, 78 Princes Street, in 1827. In his preface, regarding guidebooks, the author says: 'Such publications are usually anonymous, and the purchaser thinks no more of the unknown author than he thinks of the man who made his hat or tanned the leather of his shoes!' In this book the author made an attempt to elevate a topographical work into 'the superior region of *belles lettres*.' His method of work was as follows: After employing several months of 1826 in reading up previously-published works on his subject, he began a series of pedestrian tours throughout the country, taking as his motto a sentence from Burns: 'I have no dearer aim than to make leisurely journeys through Caledonia; to sit in the fields of her battles, to wander on the romantic banks of her streams; and to muse by the stately towers of venerable ruins, once the honoured abodes of heroes.' The stage-coach lifted the author over desolate and uninteresting tracts of country, while walking allowed him to move fast or slow as he pleased. 'I traversed,' he says, 'almost every vale in the Lowlands of Scotland and a greater proportion of those in more northerly regions. I saw all the towns except three or four.' This is a great improvement upon Herman Moll, setting down the products of a fireside invention. His walks occupied five months, and the result was a book which ran through three editions in three years, and may still be read with pleasure and profit. The *Steamboat Companion* (1825) shows a greater appreciation of the beauties of Scotland than might have been expected in pre-railway days. The *Scottish Tourist* of the same date was an intelligent, well-illustrated compilation, dedicated to Sir Walter Scott. Black's *Economical Tourist of Scotland* was first published at three shillings and sixpence in 1839, and has since grown in size, price, and usefulness, and the series has also grown with public requirements.

George Bradshaw (1801-53), a pioneer in railway guides, was trained as an engraver and printer, made engraving of maps his specialty, and for our canal systems published *Bradshaw's Maps of Inland Navigation*. The introduction of the railway system led up to *Bradshaw's Railway Time Tables* (1839), which developed into the well-known monthly railway guide with its yellow wrapper, of which No. 1 appeared in 1842. This was followed by continental railway guides, as

well as a series of about a dozen handbooks to various parts of the Continent.

Shoals of Englishmen went to the Continent after Waterloo; but the first English handbook for Paris was *Galignani's Picture of Paris* (1814), while Mariana Starke's *Letters from Italy* (1814) and *Travels on the Continent* were popular and useful handbooks for the Continental tourist of the period. Hobhouse, writing in 1817 to John Murray the publisher, alluded to the inadequate nature of the books for tourists, and the wide field of glory for one who would get an adequate book 'done like a cyclopede dictionary, by departments.' And so it happened that John Murray the second, grandfather of the present representatives of the publishing house of Albemarle Street, is the founder of the modern guidebook, although not at the instigation of Hobhouse. It happened in this way: John Murray the third was possessed with an ardent desire for travel from his earliest youth, and an indulgent father promised to gratify his desire provided he mastered the language of the country he was to travel in. In 1829, accordingly, he brushed up his German, set foot on the Continent at Rotterdam, and the result was his *Handbook for Holland* (1836), the precursor of the excellent series of red handbooks of world-wide reputation which have issued from Albemarle Street. And, as remarked in the *Edinburgh Review*, they have converted many a traveller, who without them would have resembled the "no eyes" of the story, into an intelligent and interested sightseer.

This was greatly owing to the founder being all that he wished the users of the guidebooks to be. At that time such a thing as a guidebook for Germany, France, and Spain did not exist. There was Ebel for Switzerland, Boyce for Belgium, and Mrs Starke, already mentioned, for Italy. Murray had only a few manuscript notes, and his own needs opened his eyes to the necessities of coming travellers. Notebook in hand, he jotted down every fact of utility or interest regarding streets, hotels, picture-galleries, or travelling routes. These notebooks, of which he had dozens, were submitted to his father on his return, who saw in them the germ of a good guide to which the name of *Handbook* was first applied. His travels were all accomplished in pre-railway days. The guides which followed—to Spain, Rome, Algiers, and Sicily—have been praised as amongst the best of a long series, which maintains a very high level of excellence. Handbooks to the cathedrals are a branch of the same series. One of the latest additions, which shows how the cyclist has been impressing a conservative firm like that of Murray, is a *Cycle Road-book from London to the New Forest*.

Local guidebooks are legion, and sometimes their very gossiping garrulity constitutes their chief charm. What would not be endured in an ordinary handbook becomes tolerable in a district guide. It is a great joy to be able to visit the Cairngorm Mountains under the guidance of John Hill Burton, or go from London to Land's End with Walter White, or view the Roman Wall in company with such an intelligent guide as the late Dr Bruce in his *Handbook to the Roman Wall*. The maps, illustrations, local notes, and descriptions show rare knowledge and industry. W. W. Tomlinson's *Comprehensive Guide to North-*

umberland has the rare excellence of good sense; is well informed, accurate, and scholarly. The first and second *Statistical Accounts of Scotland* are admirable companions to the guidebook, but only for library consultation. The same may be said of Blackwood's *County Histories* at present in progress. All the large towns have been well catered for. London has innumerable maps and guides, including Cunningham's *Handbook*, Hare's *Walks in London*, and Murray's *Environs of London*, giving a radius of twenty miles.

Baedeker's *Through Guide Series*, of which we have about a score, and the well-known Baedeker, of which there are two dozen in the tourist series, follow closely on the heels of Murray, and Joass for France, all of which have each their own excellences. Stanford has a very useful series of county guides also. The Americans have Appleton, the *Satchel Guide to Europe*, and many others. The big railways and shipping lines have found it to their advantage to issue elaborately-illustrated guides, as well as Cook and Gaze of tourist fame. The money spent by American and Canadian railway companies on illustrated guidebooks alone must be enormous. Some of the illustrations depict the fairest scenes on the earth's surface. One has always the suspicion, of course, that the guidebooks got up by a railway or shipping company lack the independence of those produced by private enterprise solely for the good of the greatest number. Many things are seen therein *couleur de rose*. They form excellent and entertaining picture-books, however, and often valuable souvenirs of travel.

The cyclist has also been catered for by the Touring Club and by private enterprise. Perhaps the most ingenious works in guidebooks for wheelmen are Howard's *Road-books* for Scotland, England and Wales, and Inglis's *Contour Road-book for Scotland*, which supply in easily-understood diagrams the gradients to be encountered and distances. Another volume for the North of England, we believe, is at present in progress.

From this brief review it will be seen that the guidebook has grown and improved with public requirements, and that never was it more useful and efficient than at the present time.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XVI.

IF Philipof had been inclined to consider himself the plaything of a cruel destiny—as indeed he had some right to do—before his second incarceration, he had grown ten times less in love with his 'luck' when the Tsar's ookaz opened the prison doors for him and he was at liberty to go forth a free man among his fellow-men. Such treatment as he had experienced from 'the powers that be' was sufficient to spoil the best of tempers. Philipof's never had been the best, and the assaults of destiny had so battered and ill-used it that by this time it was distinctly and decidedly a temper of the very worst quality. He came out of prison a morose, discontented, cheerless, hopeless man. His prospects were blighted; for, of course, though 'pardoned' by the Emperor, in his clemency, he

was still a bad character and a 'suspect' in the eyes of the authorities; there could be no question whatever of obtaining readmission into his beloved regiment, and therefore no hope of a career, such as his soul longed for, of military glory and advancement and honour. He might enlist, perhaps; but what would be the good of it? A marked man and a 'suspect,' as he was, could never hope to rise from the ranks—no; his hopes of military honour were dead and buried in the fortress-prison. As Philipof quitted the grim precincts of the building he was interested to recognise the student, to whose action had been due in the first instance the whole series of his misfortunes; and the sight of the man roused his pity rather than his indignation, so thin and haggard was he after his three or four years of captivity. The two men found themselves side by side in the corridor of the prison when the Tsar's amnesty to political prisoners was read out to the dozen or so of such captives then in durance at the fortress, and strange and mixed feelings came into Philipof's heart as he now for the first time set eyes upon his fellow-prisoner since that fatal day upon which they had met at the gate of the Summer Gardens. In spite of his wretched physical condition, the spirits of the little Russian were of the brightest, and his joy at the news of his approaching release was exuberant and noisy; indeed, the corridor was little better than a pandemonium with the loud cries of delight and the hurrahings of the amnestied unfortunates. Philipof himself was too bitterly indignant to join in their demonstrations. He was glad to be free, of course; but the memory of the injustice which had condemned him to the captivity from which he was now to pass outweighed at this moment even the delights of freedom. He was morose and silent; alone among the shouting, dancing throng. Coming out of the great gates the student accosted him:

'Well, brother,' he said, 'you were luckier than we others; you escaped and had a holiday for two years; upon my word, I admired you, for how on earth you got out of your window and swam away is more than I can understand. I myself would sooner perish than put my foot into ice-cold water if the choice were given me! Come, shake hands ere we part; we were fellow-sufferers after all!'

Philipof took no notice of the proffered hand, nor did he deign to reply by word or look to the other's advances.

'Ah!' said the student, wagging his head; 'you are still angry with me, I see: come, it is time to forgive me; what will not a man do to save his life? I condemned you to a year or two of prison, certainly—it would have been three and a half, but you cleverly reduced it to two—well, what then? Here we are, alive and free, both of us: otherwise I should have gone to Siberia, or been hung in chains on the fortress-wall, and

only one of two good men, instead of both, would be alive at this moment. Sir, you have restored to Russia a useful and promising citizen, and I thank you and apologise.'

'You little reptile,' said Philipof, who nevertheless could not forbear to smile, 'so you admit your guilt, now that it is too late to do me any good?'

'Admit it? Certainly, to *you*, my dear sir, and in the strictest secrecy; we are out of hearing of others, you will perceive, else I should be unable to favour you so far. I should have been glad to do you thus much courtesy at any time if we had met without witnesses. Why not? My word is as good as yours, you see; it ought not to be, you will say; but it is. But if you were to go to the governor and say: "Mr Zoubof," that's my name, "admits his guilt and my innocence!" the governor would say: "Is this true, Zoubof," and I should be under the painful necessity of declaring that Mr Philipof laboured under a strange delusion. Thus we should remain exactly where we were before—neither of us guilty and neither of us innocent—which situation was the safety of us both!'

Philipof laughed outright. 'Come,' he said, 'I meant to chastise you if I got the chance—kill you, perhaps. I may feel the inclination again if you ever cross my path after to-day; but here I am laughing at your villainy instead—which proves, I suppose, that my heart is not quite broken as I thought. I am grateful to you for that discovery at least. I suppose self-preservation is an irresistible law and must be obeyed even at the expense of one's fellows. I suppose also you would not comprehend if I told you that you have utterly ruined my life; the existence I shall be obliged to lead henceforth has no attractions for me. You will return to your interrupted career and take it up where you left it; but with me it is different. Your arrangement was an unequal one, you see, at the best.'

'Oh, nonsense,' said the student airily; 'life is full of possibilities; if your way is barred in one direction you need only take another; happiness is simply a matter of point-of-view. I could introduce you to a crowd of people—enthusiastic, clever, intense, delightful persons—who would soon teach you where to look for a new career of interest and glory if—as you say—your own is blasted.'

'Thanks,' said Philipof; 'the delightful people who put you up to taking a cock-shot at the Emperor, I suppose; no, thank you, it is not in my line. If you will take my advice, you will drop those charming friends of yours and sweep a crossing. Shooting at emperors is not a paying game. May I ask what induced you to try it?'

'Oh come, come, come—no politics!' said the student, holding up a minatory finger as to a naughty child; 'we never mention these things; I will only say that a great deal would have

happened differently if you had not jogged my arm; you did a bad stroke of business for both of us that day; but I forgive you.'

'You are very good,' said Philipof, smiling again; 'and were many of the delightful people you speak of present on that occasion?'

'Half the crowd you saw, including some of the policemen,' replied the other coolly. 'As I said just now, things would have been wonderfully different to-day if you had not jogged my arm!'

Philipof walked silently along musing. If this little rascal was not lying there was much food for thought in what he had said. The two men were crossing the ice-path from the fortress to the mainland while this conversation proceeded, the remainder of the released prisoners walking in twos and threes in front or behind. A few gendarmes brought up the rear, and a pair of these uniformed officials led the procession, which was bound to the police department in order that the final arrangements might be made for their release and the conditions read out under which each of them was to enjoy freedom.

The student broke the silence presently.

'I am dying to know how you escaped,' he said; 'the warder would or could tell me nothing about it, drunken brute; he did his best to drown me, for which I ultimately got him expelled by complaining to the governor. You are stronger than I am; I suppose you broke the bars of your window? I tried—and I was pretty desperate I can tell you!—but it was no use; they were as hard as the devil's heart!'

'Mine were broken for me by the Troitsky Bridge, which broke loose and charged the fortress wall; a corner of it luckily squeezed itself in at my window and started the bars.'

'Good!' said the little student enthusiastically; 'good! and you floated away on top of the bridge—splendid! and you to talk of ill-luck! My dear sir, you are the spoilt child of fortune!'

Philipof gave the true version of his adventure, to his companion's unbounded admiration, after which the latter gave an entertaining account of his own escape which, since it was really somewhat original and interesting, may be passed on to the reader.

'When the water began to flow in at the window,' said the student, 'I was just about as scared as I had ever been in all my twenty-eight years of life—for if there is a thing I dread on this earth it is immersion in cold water. I am told that the English are in the habit of bathing in it every morning for choice, and I think this is about the strongest proof of any that the English are as most people affirm—mad. As for me, the very idea of such a thing would be enough to make me mad, and the prospect of being flooded by that icy fluid and gradually drowned in it did actually madden me for the time being. I had observed the water rising fast, and had hammered at the door till my hands and feet were sore; but Ivan

was drunk, as you know, and did not hear either that or the frenzied language in which I shrieked for him. Then I tugged at the bars in hopes of breaking one off and smashing in the door panels with it; but that was no go.

'Then I gave my old prayers a turn. I had forgotten them long ago, though a word or two came back to me; but I made a very poor business of the praying, which was perhaps the reason that nothing seemed to come of it; or perhaps—which is still more likely—Providence doesn't think much of the prayers, in emergency, of those who treat it shabbily when things run smoothly. At any rate, the water continued to rise and I continued to yell and weep and curse and pray in turns, and if old Ivan had heard the expression of my opinion of him during that bad quarter of an hour I really think it would have sobered him. He never heard me, however; and I stood on my bed and watched the water rush in at the window and slowly creep up the legs of the table and chair as it grew deeper and deeper in the room; and I may assure you that I was a very desperate and miserable man.'

CHAPTER XVII.

'I think I had quite given myself up for lost,' continued the student, 'and had settled into a condition of numb and silent despair, waiting for the unspeakable misery of feeling the first chill of the water upon my feet as I stood on the bed—it had risen by this time to within an inch of the level at which I was perched—when suddenly I observed that the table and chair had both been lifted, so to say, off their legs, and were floating side by side about the room. At first, this further evidence of the depth of the water only caused my already well-filled cup of despair to overflow, and I started crying and shrieking and cursing again. But after a while an idea struck me. If that table were to float close to me, which it probably would directly, why shouldn't I capture it and make myself a raft? At all events, if I sat or lay upon the top of it, though I might get wet I should not drown until the room was quite full of water; and there was always a chance that the flood might not rise quite so high as to fill the cell up to the ceiling!

'The idea comforted me a little, and restored just sufficient vitality to my numbed limbs to allow of my stretching out and securing both the table and the chair. I fastened the chair beneath the table, to make a better raft, using one of my two blankets to do it, and wrapped the second blanket round me for warmth, for it was bitterly cold with the window broken and the room full of icy water. The flood was on the point of lapping up over the edge of the bed now, and I determined to screw up my courage and get aloft on my raft. I'm not very big nor very heavy, but I was both too big and too heavy for that table. It floated all right; but though I lay on my side and screwed myself into almost nothing, my heels went into the water on one side and my arms up to the elbows on the other. The shock, when the table first sank with my weight, and put me half under water, was killing. I assure you—and it's the plain truth—I wished I had never saved myself (at your expense), but had got myself respectably hanged on the fortress wall.'

'However, I grew accustomed to the water after a bit, and floated about the room for an eternity, clinging on like grim death to the sides of my table. My bed, an iron one, soon disappeared, and I was presently on a level with the window, and had a fine view of the outside world, which was all water and ice. Then I rose above the level of the window and had nothing to look at but the ceiling, a couple of feet or so above my head, and still the water continued to rise.

'It rose another foot, and I thought it was all over with me. I felt more cheerful about it now, because I had become hardened to the coldness of the water. I lay and watched the ceiling and wondered how I had better act when my nose should come in contact with it and acquaint me with the fact that hope was at an end. I decided that it would be best to allow myself to slip head first into the water, and get it over at once. I remembered once drowning a kitten by filling a pail quite full and placing a tray on the top. That kitten's fate was very like this. I would never drown another kitten in that way, I vowed, if ever I got out of this fix.

'Well, my nose never touched that ceiling. I smelt the sour whitewash of it distinctly, as I lay there within an inch or two of it; but that was the nearest I came to the top, and the flood turned just at the proper moment to save the life of a distinguished Russian citizen, who must surely be destined to great things, you will say, after so providential an escape. Perhaps you are right.

'When the water fell to its usual level and the cell had been pumped dry from outside, the door was opened and Ivan the varder brought—not my breakfast—but a stretcher to carry me away upon. I am glad I was alive because of Ivan's face when he saw me, if for no other reason. Having seen that, I feel that I have not lived quite in vain. I told Ivan many things about himself which must have been new to him; at all events I am sure he had never before heard himself so accurately or so eloquently described; nor had so many ingenuous wishes for his future in this world and the next ever yet, I am sure, been lavished upon him. The governor visited me in person and was polite and interested. He sent me in a very excellent breakfast, together with three dry blankets, and the stove was allowed to go night and day for some time. Ivan very properly departed; if ever I meet Ivan again, in private life, I shall continue the settlement of accounts with him, and if I do not stick a knife into him it will be solely because he happens to be turned my way and has not his back to me.'

By this time Philipof and his voluble companion were nearing the police department, and here the released prisoners were requested to enter in single file and to refrain from further conversation. Then, the formalities having been gone through, each was allowed to depart whither he would, after giving an assurance that he would report himself at certain stated intervals. Philipof was given to understand that if he did not so report himself, the police would very soon invade his premises and know the reason why; he would not escape the supervision of the Third Department—it would be useless to attempt it—every action of his would be known and reported; if

he behaved himself for a few years the supervision would be relaxed; for the present he was still a 'suspect.'

These were the conditions under which poor Sasha started life anew on his second departure from the fortress.

His first visit was to Olga's mansion, where he found all well, and where the faithful Matrona and the equally-devoted Katia fell upon his neck after the approved Russian style. After this he visited his former employer, the Englishman, because it was necessary to find some sort of work in order to keep body and soul together, and Sasha hoped to learn that Mr Harrison was willing to give him the same situation in his office which he had filled satisfactorily enough for nearly two years on a former occasion. But Mr Harrison, though as genial and kind as ever, did not see his way, after hearing Philipof's story, to offer him re-employment in his office; these sudden goings and comings did not conduce, he pointed out, to that smoothness and regularity with which the wheels of a commercial establishment like his own should move. As a matter of fact he had filled up Sasha's place, and did not feel disposed to turn out a good man in order to readmit him—it would not be fair.

This was so evidently true that poor Philipof could only sigh and prepare to go. But Mr Harrison was sorry for this hardly-used young Russian, and bade him wait a moment. Then he wrote and handed to Philipof two or three letters of recommendation to other English merchants in the place, armed with which Sasha sallied forth once more in search of employment, and this time successfully. It was neither a very lucrative nor a very glorious situation that he now found; but it would at least, he hoped, provide him with the wherewithal to procure the necessaries of life, and perhaps something better might turn up presently. The post offered to and accepted by Philipof was that of superintendent of the small fleet of 'lighters' engaged in loading grain for the English firm which employed him. Sasha's duty was to see each morning that the lighters were severally in their proper places at the wharves, and in the evening to repair to the office with reports as to the loading of each during the day. It was a dreary and monotonous job at best, and not the kind most calculated to wean Philipof's mind from the contemplation of its own grievances; on the contrary, it was the sort of employment to drive a man into himself, and to make of a discontented person a dangerous one; of an ill-tempered man a savage one; and of an unhappy man a desperate one. It is not suggested that poor Philipof became all this at once—he went downhill, that is all that is meant. His tendency was not in the direction of peace of mind after storm, but rather of an increased perturbation of the mental atmosphere.

Nor did the conduct of the police tend to improve matters in this respect. These officials soon made it clear to the unfortunate 'suspect' that, though free, he was still in bondage. Once a week he was obliged to report himself at his district office, and if he allowed the proper day to go by without having gone through the stipulated formality, that very night he was sure of a domiciliary visit from a half-dozen or so of sworded and kaftaned officials, who searched the

apartment for papers, and turned the place upside down in order to make sure that all was in order and no mischief hatching. It was in vain that poor Philipof explained that his duties at the wharves demanded his attendance there until after the hour which had been appointed for his presence at the police office; the officials merely shrugged their shoulders and said it seemed hard, but what was to be done? Orders were orders, and the department presumably knew what it was about.

Another circumstance which increased the bitterness with which Sasha looked out upon life and destiny was that when he walked abroad in the greater and more fashionable streets, as he was able to do now without fear, he occasionally met men who had been his friends and companions in former days, and these almost invariably avoided him or gave him the cut direct. This sort of thing maddened him, and he found it wiser to avoid those parts of the town in which such offensive behaviour might at any moment upset his equanimity. The sight of officers of his own regiment, dressed in the old uniform, was specially trying to his feelings; and the thought that, through no fault of his own, he was debarred for ever from wearing the familiar tunic and associating with his natural fellows was intolerable and maddening. One evening he walked straight up against Sergeyef, an officer of his corps whom he had always cordially disliked, a cowardly, bullying sort of man who ill-treated the privates and systematically browbeat the junior officers. Philipof was in a bad humour already when he met the man, and the fellow's offensive bearing irritated him further. He therefore barred Sergeyef's passage. 'Well,' he said, 'don't you recognise me; where are your manners?'

Sergeyef stared insolently, but affected not to know him. Philipof seized him by the ears and shook him: 'Oh,' he cried, 'don't you recognise me? try again.' Sergeyef grew very white and felt for his sword; Sasha saw the motion of his hand and forestalled him. 'No, no,' he said, 'no brawling, please!' He wrested the sword from the other as he spoke, and threw it on the ground. 'Now,' he continued, shaking the wretched Sergeyef like a medicine bottle, 'who am I?—quick!'

'I—I believe you are Mr Philipof—I—I'm sorry—I didn't recognise you!' said the scared little officer. He thought he was dealing with a lunatic.

'Captain Philipof, if you please!'

'Ca—captain Philipof, of course!'

'Good: now! salute me, please!'

Sergeyef obeyed.

'Excellent. Now take your sword and go,' said Sasha; 'and, stay! You can tell the other fellows that I shall treat any one of them in the same way if they presume to cut me in future. Do you understand?'

Sergeyef understood marvellously well, and told his fellow-officers as much of the incident as was convenient. Most of these agreed that Philipof was mad, and had better be avoided as a dangerous lunatic; but one or two who knew him better said that it was 'just like dear old Sasha,' and that he was no more mad than Sergeyef himself. It was difficult for any one to believe in

Philipof's innocence of the crime imputed to him, in face of the circumstantial tales of his guilt circulated broadcast four years ago and never satisfactorily contradicted; nevertheless there remained some who had never believed him capable of such an act as that of which he was accused, and who steadily and sturdily avowed that there was a mistake somewhere. If these men had met Philipof they would have greeted him cordially, and this would have done him a world of good; but unfortunately he never came across them.

(To be continued.)

A SHETLAND COTTAGE-INDUSTRY.

IN these days when what are known as 'home industries' are being brought forward as a means of eking out the earnings of our remote country populations, it may interest readers to hear something about the manufacture of Shetland hosiery—an industry, as the name implies, confined to the lonely homes of ancient Thule.

The chief characteristic of Shetland hosiery is the extreme fineness of the wool used. This wool is obtained from the native Shetland sheep, an animal of decidedly meagre appearance, and which a southern flockmaster would be inclined to 'have none of.' Nevertheless, this humble beast, picking up a scanty living on the bleak hillsides where its larger relatives would starve, produces wool of remarkable fineness; and when it is mentioned that the natural colours vary from black and white to an endless variety of grays, browns, fawns, and chestnuts of many shades (locally called 'moorit'), it will be seen that the Shetland people have ready to their hand raw material of the most suitable kind for their purpose.

In connection with the fineness of the wool the method of taking it from the sheep is worthy of note. It is not clipped or shorn in the usual way; but, at the proper season, is literally *plucked* from the backs of the animals, it being averred that shearing tends to deteriorate the quality of every succeeding fleece; and, of course, to keep the yield of wool as fine as possible is a great desideratum. The plucking referred to usually appears to strangers to be a cruel expedient; but in reality the sheep seems to suffer no more from it than from ordinary shearing.

The first process in the actual manufacture of the wool is that of combing and carding. This is done by the aid of two 'cards,' or wire-toothed brushes, somewhat resembling large curry-combs, between which the wool is first smoothed and straightened, and finally rolled into loose, slender strands ready for spinning. The spinning is done on a very primitive-looking instrument called a 'spinney.' In most Shetland houses one or more of these can be seen, and the women acquire great deftness in handling and drawing out the strands of wool as they are rapidly spun into fine yarn on these wheels; the same wheel being afterwards used to twine the yarn into as many plies as may be required.

The wool is now ready for knitting, and passes to what may be called the second stage in the process of manufacture. It should be understood, however, that the whole work of preparation is

usually done by the knitters themselves, without the aid of machinery other than what has already been mentioned. An old custom is for the women of several neighbouring cottages to gather in the home of one of their number to give a day's assistance at carding or spinning, the courtesy being in due course returned all round; so, with gossip and story, lightening the burden of what must be otherwise a monotonous task. But though this system of mutual help is occasionally resorted to, it is much more common for a woman single-handed to go through the whole work of preparation and manufacture, from the gathering of the wool until in the shape of some knitted article it is ready for the market.

In the working of the yarn into the various marketable articles much time and skill are required. It is safe to say that almost every Shetland woman is a good knitter; but, as the things manufactured are various, it is natural that some should excel in particular branches of the industry. Thus it comes about that you may find one woman, or, it may be, family, engaged in making stockings and underclothing only, another making gloves, while a third may take to the finer work of shawls and lace goods. All acquire great dexterity at their various kinds of work; but it is in the last-mentioned that the greatest scope for displaying individual taste and ingenuity comes in. Some of the designs wrought in the shawls are indeed very beautiful; while the mazy intricacy of the work is often wonderfully fine. The varied natural colours of the wool, too, afford scope for the exercise of taste in the matter of shade and combination, though a large number of the finer fabrics are made in pure white. An idea of the fineness of some of the work may be gathered when it is stated that shawls are made measuring from two to three yards square that weigh not more than two and a quarter ounces, and that can easily be passed through a lady's finger-ring. Shawls of this variety are usually sold at from thirty to forty pounds each; and often represent the sole work of a knitter for from one to two years.

Artificial colouring is not much resorted to; but a notable exception is found in a peculiar kind of goods locally known as Fair Isle hosiery. The peculiarity lies in the great variety of the colours into which the wool is dyed, the knitted articles reminding one somewhat of what might be called mongrel Highland tartans. The stains used to produce these colours are all found on the islands, being prepared from indigenous roots and lichens. Tradition has it that the natives were first taught the art of preparing and using these dyes by some Spanish sailors who were shipwrecked on Fair Isle, the southernmost of the Shetland group. It appears to be a fact that one of the ships of the mighty Armada perished on this island, and that part of the crew lived for a time amongst the islanders, so that it seems possible that the tradition may have some foundation in fact, though doubt has recently been expressed on the point.

The financial results of the Shetland hosiery trade are in the aggregate very considerable. It is difficult to get at the real figures; but the export trade alone is computed by those in close connection with it to be worth from twelve thousand to fifteen thousand pounds a year to the islands.

The quantity used locally must also be considerable, home-made underclothing being largely used by the Shetland people; so that it will probably not be far wide of the mark to put the total annual value at about twenty thousand pounds. This to a population of under thirty thousand is an important item of income. It has the advantage, too, that all classes of the community participate in it, and that it is subject to little or no fluctuation of value or demand from year to year.

The work is mostly done at times when the knitters would otherwise be idle, such as in the long winter evenings, or at odd times in the ordinary routine of a crofter-fisherman's house. There is little or no outlay in connection with it; the crofters growing their own wool, and, as has been said, the whole process of manufacture being carried out at home. The goods are usually disposed of in the first place to dealers in Lerwick, where there are several large warehouses devoted to the trade. Thence they find their way into the markets on the mainland, and even—in smaller quantities—to most parts of the world; for Shetland hosiery has made a name for itself that is world wide. The parcel post has been found to be most advantageous to the trade in providing a rapid and cheap means of transit; the lightness of the goods and the ease with which they can be parcelled and handled rendering them very suitable for this means of conveyance.

In the development of this industry Shetland has shown a worthy example of what may be done in a poor district to make the best of the resources at hand; and has over and over again, when fishings have been poor and crops a failure, found that in it she had a surer stay against the proverbial rainy day than in her more conspicuous paths of human industry.

A STRIKE IN THE SIERRAS.

By E. and H. HERON.

'I've been sampling the raw article on the Pacific coast, up and down thirty degrees more or less north and south of the line, any time these twenty years, and I've no opinion of one-horse republics left,' Gormully was saying. '*Experientia docet*, as we used to say at school.'

I had just been telling Gormully that, having proved the utter futility of tinkering at a time-worn profession in England, I proposed to make my fortune in nitrate somewhere in the neighbourhood of the tropic of Capricorn; and Gormully, lately home from Santa Maria, was in consequence giving me his views on things in general and tropical republics in particular, as only Gormully, who had smoked his pipe and made his observations in every port in the old world and the new, could.

He ceased speaking, and I took up the conversation.

'There are degrees, I suppose,' I said.

'Even the best regulated of the lot are as uncertain in their tempers as pet rams,' he replied, settling his big frame more comfortably into the deep wicker-chair; 'as many men as many minds, and as many separate—and operative—interests.'

'I'm bound to go and try my chance there now,' I remarked.

We were sitting on the terraced lawn below a green-shuttered house, overlooking the ribbon of blue sea, stretched smooth and shining on that summer day, between the east coast of Jersey and the white cliffs of La Manche.

'Nitrate's not played out yet,' said Gormully encouragingly. 'In fact, there's more than one way of making a decent living in that part of the world, provided the existing government don't put one of their ingeniously-assorted spokes into your wheel.'

'They run a sort of modified republic here,' I said, 'and it seems to answer very well.'

'Yes, of a chastened and middle-aged type, which moves with the slow step of wisdom, and has only a few harmless vices. My dear fellow, you're a fool! Shut up in England all your life, you've no more notion than a child what a government can and, on occasion, will do to interfere with the aims of the individual.'

'But an Englishman is safe anywhere,' I put in.

'You're quite right to believe so at any rate. It begets confidence, which is always useful. As a nation we are given to assuming things and making them facts by force of pigheaded conviction. But'—Gormully sent a long spiral of smoke upwards into the quiet air, and narrowed his eyes to look at me—'there are a good many ways of getting rid even of us where we're not wanted; and it is often impossible to make a government responsible. Now when I began life one of my first experiences was a strike in the Sierras'—

'Well, we've strikes at home for that matter,' I observed with pardonable pride.

'With a difference.' Then he proceeded to make some idiotic remarks about the French coast.

I laughed. 'Gormully,' I said, 'I have introduced you to the best brand of cigars within a thousand miles, I've seen you home more than once in an irresponsible—mood, shall we say? I have saved you from sampling the justice of the Jurats and the indignity of being sentenced to pay a fine in French.'

'And if you have!'

'One good turn deserves another. Go on.'

Gormully grinned and produced another cigar of the before-mentioned high-class brand, such as persons of moderate means may enjoy in the islands, where there is no iniquitous duty levied on the lonely man's friend.

'You must understand,' he began, 'that what I am about to tell you happened some while ago. I was offered the post of superintendent of a mine in the Sierras. It sounded as well as an auctioneer's advertisement, and I, being guileless and not yet twenty-three, jumped at it.'

He drew the whisky and seltzer nearer to him and mixed a carefully-proportioned drink.

'The place was some thirty miles up from the plains, deep in the mountains, and though I found the mine was not much more to look at than a good-sized rabbit-hole, yet there was the novel freedom of the life to be enjoyed under simply Al conditions of climate and scenery, and in fact I fancied the whole business down to the ground. The name of my boss was Atterson. He was a wiry, hard-bitten chap, who never hurried himself, and was always there in time. It did not matter where "there" was. He carried about

with him an air of interested surprise that completely misled casual acquaintances. He'd seen events boil over more than once in those regions, and was generally about with a ladle to scoop up his own interests. I lived with him and worked with him for a considerable time, and I found he had an aptitude for a good many things beside cooking an omelette.

'At first there were some five or six of us, Englishmen, learning our work and getting the mine, which had hitherto been run on aboriginal lines, into some sort of order. When this was in a fair way to be accomplished and I had got the hang of my duties, Atterson started off with the assayer and one or other of the assistants to prospect farther on, and by degrees he planted out the whole lot of them with the exception of the assayer and a country-born idiot called Platt, who kept the accounts. These two remained more or less at headquarters. As for Atterson, one could never count upon him, as his business took him to the various points where he was opening mines in the mountains, or in the other direction down to the city and port of Santa Maria.

'Things went smoothly for a time, but after I had been there a year or so, troubles began to crop up, the peons turned sulky, and I could not get at any reasonable explanation of the discontent.

'Atterson had been away for an unusually long period with the assayer, and Platt was an absolute dolt outside his immediate province, besides being too copper-coloured to breed any confidence in me, so that I was thrown entirely on my own resources. Therefore, when Atterson put in an appearance late one night, I wasn't sorry to see him.

'In the morning as I was telling him how matters stood, a tall, dark man strolled past the office window towards Platt's quarters.

"Who's that?" asked Atterson abruptly.

"He gives out he's a pure-bred Mexican, and they call him Don Ignacio," I answered. "But he seems to be a hanger-on of the Cacique's. He's lived in the village for some time now, and is rather a chum of Platt's."

"He's a greaser," said Atterson conclusively.

"I know him. We came across each other years ago at Acapulco, when I was a tenderfoot."

'I heard the details of that meeting afterwards from an eye-witness. It appears that Ignacio had got up a row with a young fellow who had made his pile, married a pretty girl, and was just starting to spend his honeymoon in Europe, when he had the misfortune to be drawn into a gamble and a quarrel by the greaser. The affair looked ugly, when Atterson, who had lately arrived in the country, interfered. Knives and pistols weren't worth a cent in that fight, my informant said, for Atterson went in at Ignacio with his bare fists. Ignacio used the weapons he was born to, but Atterson, at twelve stone, hit like a cart-horse kicking. Ignacio wasn't recognisable for a month. That was Atterson's debut in the Republics, and I am bound to say he has lived up to it.'

Gormully knocked off the ash of his cigar on the toe of his boot and smiled pleasantly over the recollections Atterson's career afforded.

'Now you see,' he continued, 'a greaser is

like no other mortal except a Red Indian for unappeasable vindictiveness. He's a Red Indian in his grievances and a cat in his gratitude. Atterson, however, appeared to have forgotten all about Ignacio, and to my disappointment went off again at once, only telling me to keep a sharp lookout. And this time he took Platt with him, so I was left alone.

'After that the discontent grew day by day, and the plot, whatever it was, began to thicken. I know now of course that Ignacio was at the bottom of it all. He'd not forgotten his whipping, and was on fire till he could do Atterson a mischief; and if the plot included shunting the boss into the permanent siding we call Paradise, why, so much the better.

'Ignacio knew how to make himself useful in various disreputable ways, and consequently possessed friends in high places, who were quite willing to make use of his private feelings when occasion served.

'All of a sudden the peons struck, or did their equivalent, which means they lay about in the sun in their striped blankets, and got drunk on aguardiente if they could afford it, and on pulque if they couldn't. You can get drunk on pulque for about two cents if you are not in a hurry.

'They came to me and said they wanted more wages, and I gave them the requisite abuse, and decided to shut down the mine and appeal to the government later on if the trouble continued. Under ordinary circumstances I should have been right, but I didn't happen to know that on this special occasion the government were in it for reasons of their own.

'So I shut down, and sat on my heels to await developments.

'I had noticed for more than a week that the camp was filling up with outsiders. All the tramps and cut-throats in the country swarmed in and settled like flies on carrion.

'I had not sense enough to calculate that whatever had brought these gentlemen about would be got through with before the wine-shops ran dry. This would take ten days on the rough, so that I might have expected any disturbance to fall in about the Friday week after the Wednesday I shut down, when the peons would be full up and ripe for anything. At that time, however, I had not my present experience, so I let things drift.

'On the Friday night I went round the "arroya" about dusk to see that all was right. I was leaning over the lower stockade, smoking my pipe, when I heard a voice apparently at my feet:

"Lean down, señor, and listen."

'Then I perceived a man lying close in under the shadow of the palings, a poor wretch of a peon, who had come to sell information. I bent down and he whispered to me through a crevice between the uprights.

'He told me that an organised attack was to be made upon the house and offices just after midnight, as it was believed that the place was worth looting.

'I asked him why they thought so.

"Even a blind mule knows the way to his own mouth, señor," he replied. "The mine is as rich as a dream; it is spoken of in the hot country and as far also as Santa Maria."

'By further questioning I extracted what I had begun to expect, that Ignacio was the instigator of the plot, and that he had promised rewards to all and sundry who would join in the projected attack.

'I explained to Pedro that we had been expecting this outbreak for some time, and had in consequence laid down a train of dynamite between the main building and other offices, and he would of course guess the fate of any persons who happened to be in the vicinity when the explosion occurred. We had as a matter of fact been digging some drains. "So if you take my advice," I added, "you will carry a message from me down to the General, by which means you will be absent if anything awkward happens, besides gaining double the reward I have already promised you."

'He rose to this, and after some haggling we arranged the matter, and he slid off as he came.

'I stayed where I was for ten minutes, watching the dark figures in the camp below eddying and humming round the lights in the wine-shops. There was a good deal of noise, and I fancied something out of the common was on foot. I was exceedingly uncomfortable, I can tell you, for I saw little prospect of saving the premises, and what was a good deal more to the point, my own life. I felt bound to do what I could to keep the rioters at bay in the hope that the troops might arrive during the small hours. But by that time the "arroya," if not the office, would be surrounded and my chance of escape gone.

'I was turning back to the house when a bird cried near the spot I had just quitted. After a moment's hesitation I strolled back towards it, and found Pedro had returned, he was breathless with running.

"Señor Atterson is dead!" he said.

"Dead? How do you know?"

"They are telling it below there. He had an accident at the new mine. It is quite true, for José saw it, and he has run in with the news."

'Upon this he urged me to escape while there was yet time, for he assured me that the fear of Atterson would have kept many of the peons in check—in case of his return, but that now there was nothing for me but flight.

"You seem very anxious for my safety?"

"Shall I not otherwise lose my reward?" he answered candidly. "In an hour's time, señor, at the latest, you must escape from this place; even now there are watchers on the other side, because they think you will make for the plains. But you must go upwards, upwards. You will find a pony at the turn of the road above the mine."

'I concluded that I might trust him, as his interests could only be secured by my escape. Yet I could not make up my mind to desert the buildings until I saw better reason for going. Besides I was concerned to get any money there might be in Platt's office put away somewhere out of reach of the peons.

'There happened to be a good deal in hand—in silver mostly of course—and it struck me that as it was impossible to carry it away, it might not be a bad plan to shovel it into the drain, one end of which was still unfinished and open. This I managed to do, and to get it well out of sight of the opening at the end, which I left gaping as

I found it. The last place a thief looks in is an unfastened box.

"I worked in the dark like a navvy, and the thing I chiefly remember was the smell of the roses heavy on the night-air.

"Getting back to the house, I barricaded the doors, as, if the worst came to the worst, I did not suppose my future movements would include the use of either of them! My plan was to sit tight as long as I could and avoid being shot, meanwhile the soldiers might arrive in time to save the place from being completely wrecked.

"The village was quiet enough by this time, and in spite of Pedro's warning I began to think the whole affair might resolve itself into nothing more serious than big talk amongst Ignacio and his friends.

"Just then there was a slight noise at the door, I turned the lantern on it and saw a paper spill moving in along the ground. I picked it up and read three words, "Let me in," followed by Atterson's crabbed and unmistakable signature.

"He was laughing under his breath when I got him inside.

"They're closing in round the stockade," he said. "I had a narrow squeak of it!"

"Why in the world have you come here?" I exclaimed.

"Why in the world have you stayed here?" he retorted.

"Because I'm paid to do it, I suppose," I said.

"True. And I came round to give you leave to—bolt."

"By the way, now I come to think of it," I went on, "I understood you were dead."

"Never believe I'm dead, Gormully," he replied in his dry way, "until you have seen my corpse, and not even then without further evidence. I have a simple little plot on hand of my own, which could not be carried out while I was supposed to be alive. Therefore as a good opportunity offered to be killed at the upper mine, I took it. It's a delicate thing to get palpably killed anywhere! But hurry up and let's have a square meal before we start. Meantime tell me what you have heard."

"While we ate, I told him all I knew and what I had done.

"Good!" said he. "Now secure the books, and we'll start. Ignacio and Co. must be on the warpath, they're so quiet. They'll try to rush the place directly."

"He went into the little sleeping-room at the back of the house, and dragged out a long coil of knotted rope from a cupboard. I asked him what he was going to do.

"As our friends outside object to our strolling casually away by the front door, it only remains for us to drop out of the back window," he said shortly, and set about securing the rope to a couple of big hooks in the wall.

"I must explain that the sleeping-room overlooked a narrow ravine; the wall of the house stood on the very edge of the precipice, which fell sheer away without foothold for a hundred feet. Below this the trees grew thickly, feathering down the steep slopes and hiding the torrent in the hollow. A small window gave on to this gully.

"I watched him make his preparations, and

then I ventured to suggest that the rope was too short to enable us to reach the ground.

"It's long enough for our purpose; we're going to stop half-way," was all the satisfaction I got from him. "I'll go first, and when I signal with the rope, you follow. Keep steady. Now!"

"He slipped through the window and disappeared, while I waited with my heart in my mouth. If there is one thing I like less than another, it is monkey-work. I'm not built for it.

"At the same moment firing began outside, and before Atterson signalled for me, the peons were battering at the doors. The sash was a trifle narrow for my bulk, and I've known few less comfortable periods in my life than the one I spent squeezing through the window till I found myself with nothing but a knot of rope between me and the yielding velvet blackness of space, while a strong mountain breeze tugged at my back. The rope was taut, however, and I let myself carefully down till I felt Atterson's hands about my feet. He pulled me in through a mass of leaves and thorns, and the next second I found myself lying on the floor of one of the low-browed galleries of an old native mine, the opening to which on the face of the precipice was masked by bushes. Atterson explained that he had discovered these long-disused galleries by chance at a point where our own workings approached them, and had kept the secret as a valuable asset in view of such an emergency as the present.

"The rope was then cast loose and hung swaying over the depths of the ravine, into which we hoped the rioters would conclude I had fallen while attempting to escape.

"As we cautiously made our way along the gallery we heard the dull roar of some explosion overhead, and I remarked on the amount of damage the peons would probably crowd into the next two hours.

"I've been in these parts some time," said Atterson contentedly. "You take my word for it, we won't lose by this night's work, whoever does! If we were safely out of this burrow the worst would be over."

"The peons know everything," I said presently; "they must know of this mine."

"I've proof enough of that," returned Atterson pointedly. "They know everything—nearly. One of their limitations is, luckily, the extent of my knowledge. Look here!"

"He turned his lamp into a crevice, which, though only about eight inches high, ran back some feet—about as far as a man's arm could reach in fact. The contents of this and other similar ones showed me conclusively that our peons were even less honest than I had given them credit for.

"I respect the sanctity of these 'caches,' but they are as good as a detective office to me all the same," said Atterson.

"That's how you caught Raphael so neatly!" I exclaimed, alluding to a recent act of justice dealt out by Atterson. "I've often wondered how you managed that."

"After a careful survey all round the mouth of the mine we emerged into a mountain path, where we found Atterson's horse. Pedro had kept his promise with regard to the pony, which came in

very handy. Mounting, we rode away to an outlying spur of the Sierras, from which we could catch the first glimpse of the troops as they came up from the plains.

'After we had gone some distance, Atterson turned in his saddle, and pointed to a flare in the sky.

"Look!" he said. "These fools are firing the lower sheds. Some one will have to pay over this affair! We've gone far enough. Keep to the right among the trees."

'While we waited for the dawn we fell into talk and then I learned something of the methods of the Santa Maria Government.

"The sight of Ignacio made me 'ware snakes in the first instance," Atterson told me; "especially as he appeared to be living in the camp for the sole pleasure of cultivating Platt's acquaintance. So I left before he had any reason to imagine I had spotted him. I made straight for Santa Maria, and lay low, making inquiries. You may have begun to collect some dim notions as to the lines this state is run on. I gathered that the executive were hard up, and the troops clamouring for pay. I nosed around a bit more, and then it came out that Ignacio was in communication with the powers that be; and after that I did not need the law and the prophets to tell me what was going to happen."

"Do you think the government had any hand in the strike?" I asked.

"I'm coming to that," he said. "I felt certain a strike would be the next act of the play, and I waited on at Santa Maria to see what measures would be taken on receipt of that information."

"What did you expect them to do?" I inquired, as I had no notion of the tyranny possible in a self-governing state.

"Why, in the ordinary way," said he, "they would have sent up an officer with a score or so of their fierce little soldiers with orders to shoot down the rioters in the bulk, and also any extraneous individuals who had been unlucky enough to make themselves disliked. There is no partiality shown in these expeditions, I'll say that for them."

"They made no military demonstration this time," I said.

"No; they just sat on their heels like yourself, my son, and waited for developments," returned Atterson, mimicking my tone. "When I saw the troops were not forthcoming, I reasoned that the government was playing its own game, which wasn't ours. A very little thinking is required to give one the general run of their innocent hopes."

'I intimated I could not imagine what they were after.

"I am the sole owner of this mine, which is reputed rich—and is not so bad in reality—as we know," proceeded Atterson. "It's productive, and that's a fact. Suppose I dropped suddenly into a premature grave, the government could take their pickings—if no more—from my heirs; and it is just on the cards that they could make it too expensive for the said heirs to realise my possessions out here. On coming to Santa Maria, you may be sure, Ignacio made it known in the suitable quarter that if any one should happen to be wanted to

dispose of me and give trouble up here in a general way, he'd be proud to undertake the job for what he could make out of ready money on the premises.

"In due time it was hinted that if he cared to get up a trifle of discontent among my employes, the government would give him a free hand for a limited period, during which he could help himself as liberally as fortune permitted."

"Then you think they will disregard my appeal sent through Pedro?" I exclaimed, not liking the prospect thus opened out.

"By no means! There is a factor to be taken into account in an affair of this kind that I fear Ignacio has overlooked; which is that the government must keep its reputation whitewashed, especially at the present moment, when it has a loan on hand and investors over the water are showing symptoms of growing shyness. No, no; on receiving your message they will calculate that a couple of hours should suffice for your removal and the completion of Ignacio's plans. At the end of that time they will despatch troops, and revenge you severely on their cat's-paws; peons are plenty and mostly worthless. They won't care how many they slay!"

"And Ignacio?"

"Ah, I don't know. His fate will depend on himself. I shouldn't wonder if he failed to appreciate the present position of the government. Unless he makes himself scarce in good time, it may strike the General as convenient to get rid of him too out of hand. His destiny is in the 'lap of the gods.'"

'The day was already a couple of hours old before we saw the glint of bayonets in a distant defile. Atterson looked at his watch.

"We'll give them an hour's start," said he. "It won't do to leave them any longer when their blood is up. Then we'll drop in to give the General a pleasant surprise."

"The General? Surely he won't be there!"

"I'll be very much astonished if he isn't. You don't realise this is a big thing, Gormully!"

'We carried out this programme. And the first object that met our eyes as we approached home was the dead body of Ignacio suspended from a tree in full view of the camp.

"The whitewash on the sepulchre," said Atterson.

'A little farther on we came upon a group of peons guarded by half-a-dozen troopers. They cried out to Atterson for mercy as he passed, but he rode on without turning his head.

'I need not describe how our appearance affected the General. He wasn't much of an actor anyway! Atterson overwhelmed him with effusive thanks for his promptness in coming to our aid.

'As soon as he had partially recovered himself, the General replied in suitable terms, and generously offered to make it up to us by a holocaust of peons. Atterson declined this civility on the ground that, as an employer of labour, he believed more in live Indians than in dead ones.

'The General seemed disappointed. His private opinion, no doubt, was that his government would find it cheaper to pay in men than in money.

"However, you have not lost much, señor, in this little affair," he said aloud.

'Atterson smiled.

"It is hard to tell—yet," he said, glancing round at what remained of the offices. "But I will send in a statement to the Minister of Finance at the earliest possible date."

"I almost fancied that the Spaniard made a grimace under his big moustache, as we accompanied him to the stockade."

"The ringleader has already been punished," he observed, pointing to the dead body of Ignacio.

"A personal matter, I presume?"

"Hardly, General!" replied Atterson politely.

"Shall we say a public matter?"

"Señor!" the General drew himself up.

"Justice is always a public matter," rejoined Atterson quietly. "My consul holds papers belonging to"—and he also pointed to Ignacio.

"Ah, precisely," said the General comprehensively.

"Within a week we were in full swing again up and down the monkey-pole of the mine."

Gormully ended.

"Is that the mine you run now?" I hazarded.

"Well it's one of 'em," said Gormully modestly.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A BUST of Sir Walter Scott, a finely executed copy of the famous Chantrey bust at Abbotsford, has been placed in Westminster Abbey, and was recently unveiled in the presence of a company which included many notable men. This is an event which is of wide interest; for, to quote the words of Mr Balfour, who assisted at the ceremony, it was not 'to celebrate the memory of a Scotsman, but of a man of letters whose works are the heritage of the whole English-speaking race throughout the world, and who had an almost unique position even during his own lifetime upon the continent of Europe among men of letters speaking other languages than his own.' Sir Walter Scott needs no memorial other than the works which have delighted thousands, and will delight thousands to come; but it is only right and fitting that his name should not be absent from that noble roll of eminent men whom the nation has reason to honour at the historic Abbey of Westminster. As Mr Balfour said, 'his character stands out in its broad outlines of humanity above all, or almost all, of those with whom it will be associated within the Abbey, so we may claim for him that none of those have exceeded him in genius, none of those have been more richly endowed with the gifts of imagination than he was, and none has made a better use of his unique inspiration for the benefit and for the happiness of his own and succeeding generations.'

'Signalling through Space without Wires' was the attractive title of a lecture recently given by Mr W. H. Preece at the Royal Institution. The way in which the lecturer himself achieved this result and telegraphed without wires across the Sound of Mull in 1895, when the submarine cable broke down, was briefly alluded to. But the

main purpose of the discourse was to consider the method which has been devised by Maconi, a young Italian, who in July last year brought the new system to this country, where it has been tested with successful results. In this method two spheres of brass about four inches in diameter are put into such electrical condition that a continuous torrent of sparks passes between them, producing a series of waves which will penetrate not only through air but through solid obstacles. A receiving instrument placed, it may be, at some miles from the originating-point of these waves will, if it be in electric unison with them, respond to them, so that signals sent by interrupting those waves can be deciphered at a distant point. Neither wind, rain, nor any climatic conditions will stop these wonderful penetrative waves; so that it would be possible to send messages from a point on land to the whole of a fleet of ships within range of the instrument, provided that each vessel possessed the apparatus properly attuned to receive them. Signals have in this way been successfully sent across the Bristol Channel, a distance of nine miles.

Professor Benjamin of Cleveland has lately been making some experiments with a view to find out how much power is wasted in factories from the friction arising from the employment of belts and shafting. In all large factories, the machines of which are driven from one source of power—a steam-engine—that power must be transmitted from shop to shop by means of shafting and belts; and in sixteen such factories Professor Benjamin's tests were applied, with somewhat startling results. At a bridge-material factory, where the various shops were spread over considerable space, no less than 80 per cent. of the engine's power disappeared amid the shafting. At a planing-mill the loss was 73 per cent., and at a sewing-machine factory 70 per cent. The average loss for heavy machine shops was a trifle over 62 per cent., and for factories where lighter work was done about 55 per cent. It may be noted that in places where electricity is employed for motive power, as it can be with great advantage where there is a source of energy available—such as a waterfall—little loss by shafting or belting is incurred, from the circumstance that the necessary communication between one department of a factory and another is by wire cables.

A novel method of lighting gas-jets has been adopted at the famous Victor Emmanuel Gallery at Milan, where there are many hundreds of gas-burners placed in rows. Just beneath them there is a tiny railroad track, upon which runs an electric locomotive carrying an alcohol lamp. The gas being turned on, the little engine is despatched on its journey, and does not fail to light every jet beneath which it passes.

To make a wild animal take its own portrait is the last achievement of the scientific photographer, and one which seems to open out endless possibilities for the camera. The apparatus was,

in this case, arranged by Mr Charles Hughes, of Red Bluff, California; and the remarkable picture which he obtained is reproduced in a recent number of the *Scientific American*. Mr Hughes knew well enough that certain deer were known to make their way at night along a particular trail, and he arranged a kind of trap, upon which any animal passing that way was bound to tread. Close by a camera was set up focused on the spot, and so connected by electrical means with the trap that, directly the latter was pressed, the lens would be uncovered, while at the same time a brilliant magnesium flash-light would illuminate any object which presented itself. The object in this case was a startled deer, who gives evidence by his attitude that he is not accustomed to this novel method of portraiture, although he himself has been its unwitting agent.

It is a laudable and common custom among those who are lovers of nature, and have the opportunity of doing so, to feed the wild birds which come to their windows. A lady who has lately sent an account of her woodland guests to *Nature Notes*, the magazine of the Selborne Society, seems to have been especially fortunate in wooing the confidence not only of birds but of squirrels also, who come regularly every morning to be fed from her hands. More than this, they have become so tame and bold that they will enter her room and help themselves to the good things which they know where to look for in a certain cupboard. The pleasure which this lady experiences in watching the pretty ways of her feathered and furry friends may, she says, be realised by every one residing in the country, if he or she will throw out on their lawns regularly every morning a supply of sopped bread and Barcelona nuts. In a year or two the squirrels will become as tame as hers, but only on one condition—no dog or cat must be allowed anywhere on the premises; and the lady believes that it is because the house is without barking dogs and prowling cats that the pretty rodents are so ready to pay her their daily visits.

So many persons must be interested in the discovery of coal in Kent that the paper by Mr Etheridge read at the annual conference of the Institution of Civil Engineers, which deals exhaustively with the subject, is sure to attract wide attention. The story begins just forty years ago, when Mr Godwin-Austen communicated a remarkable paper to the Geographical Society of London upon 'the possible extension of the coal measures beneath the south-east part of England.' This paper indicated that the coal measures of England, France, and Belgium were probably once contiguous, and that a link of connection would be found on our southern shores if borings were made. The opportunity came with the closing of the Channel Tunnel works in 1882, when Mr Brady, the engineer of that undertaking, having a staff of men to whom he could only give occasional employment, set them to work on a trial-boring, with the result that coal was discovered near Dover. As our readers know, a couple of shafts are now being sunk in the same locality, and before long Dover coal will become a marketable commodity. It is now the intention to make a series of borings at various points in Kent to the west of Dover, in order to see

whether, as many believe, the Kent coalfield extends towards that of Bristol.

Indian ink, so largely used by artists all the world over, forms the subject of a recent trade report by Mr Fraser, our consul at Wuku, on the Yang-tze. The ink, which is more correctly described as China ink, is only made in the Anhui province, and from Anhui it is exported to all lands. The material of the ink is lampblack of particular preparation, and the ink doubtless owes its beautiful quality to careful choice of its constituent parts. A vegetable oil, either colza or the oil expressed from the poisonous seeds of a tree extensively cultivated for the purpose, and also well known in Japan, forms the basis of the product, and to this varnish and pork fat are added. This does not seem a promising beginning for an ink used for fine drawing, but it must be remembered that the mixture is burned, and its smoke collected to produce the actual material, the lampblack of which the ink is made. This lampblack has a small quantity of glue and water added to it, and is then beaten with steel hammers on wooden anvils, scented with musk, and forced into wooden moulds. In fine weather the contents of the moulds will become dry in twenty days, when the sticks of ink are gilded with leaf gold, and are ready for market. There are about a dozen different grades of ink, varying from two shillings to seven sovereigns per pound—about thirty sticks going to each pound. The ink finds wide demand not only for drawing but for writing purposes, for throughout China, Japan, Korea, and some adjacent countries, the natives use ink in this form only—rubbing the stick down with water, and commonly using a brush set in a bamboo holder in preference to a pen. The Chinese seem to keep the finest grades of ink for home consumption.

An American specialist—Dr C. A. Wood—declares that the wearing of veils produces weak eyesight, headaches, and sometimes vertigo and nausea, and that the mischief is due not only to the eye-strain consequent upon the effort to see through or around an obstruction, but that the irregular figuring on the veil itself constitutes a torment and source of mischief to the wearer. Having made a number of experiments with different patterns of veils, Dr Wood sums up the results at which he has arrived as follows: 'Every kind of veil obstructs the sight more or less, and the most objectionable kind is the dotted veil, the influence for evil being more marked in some patterns than in others. In plain veils vision is interfered with in direct proportion to the number of the meshes to the square inch. The conclusion of the whole matter is that the least objectionable veil is that without dots, sprays, or other figures, but with large, regular meshes made with single, compact threads.'

Some interesting experiments with regard to the cold storage of home-grown apples were recently made by the Kent County Council, the stores being kept at steady temperatures of 30° to 40° for many months. The results were on the whole very satisfactory, although the fruit was found to lose 1·5 per cent. of its moisture per week, the said amount of moisture being taken up by the air and deposited upon the walls of the store. The apples remained in other respects

sound; but while the winter varieties retained their flavour and remained as hard as when first plucked, the summer apples gradually softened and lost flavour.

There are now so many amateur entomologists that there is danger of certain interesting and local British insects becoming extinct, so untiring are collectors in their capture. The council of the Entomological Society of London have thought it necessary to take action, and the result is the formation of an association for the protection of the threatened insects, and the issue of a memorandum, which is being numerously signed and which runs as follows: 'We, the undersigned, being desirous of protecting from extermination those rare and local species of insects which are not injurious to agriculture or to manufactures, do hereby agree, by our own example and by the exercise of our influence over others, to discourage the excessive collection and destruction of those species of insects which, from their peculiar habits, are in danger of extermination in the United Kingdom.'

An important experiment in electric railway-traction has recently been made in America, on the line between Berlin and Hartford. An electrically-propelled train was run on this line between two trains drawn by steam locomotives, dropped in on the time-table, as it were, without in any way interfering with the ordinary arrangements of the line or the comfort of the passengers. Colonel Heft, the chief electrical engineer of one of the lines interested in this experiment, has demonstrated that a direct current of electricity can be made to do railway duty for a distance of nearly thirteen miles without serious loss from leakage. This result will astonish many electricians, for it was an almost universal opinion that the effective range of electricity in railroad service was only six miles. If Colonel Heft's conclusions be correct, they show that from a central station a railroad could be worked having a radius of twenty-five miles. But like most other such problems, the solution of this one will resolve itself into a question of L.S.D., and on that point little information is at present available.

Cycling has a friend in the person of a distinguished member of the Berlin Medical Society, who has recently been giving much attention to that popular mode of progression. In moderation he believes that cycling is for the majority of persons a salutary form of exercise; but there are certain dangers which are brought about by over-exertion, and which professional riders and competitors in races must be prepared to face. He bases his views on observations of twelve professional riders whom he examined both before and after they had been racing. The strain upon the heart was shown by strong pulsation and acute dilatation of the left ventricle, which disappeared with rest, but would probably become permanent with oft-repeated over-exertion. There were also other symptoms which indicated that irritation of the kidneys is provoked by the sustained effort of cycling.

Christopher Columbus is so generally regarded as the discoverer of the 'New World' that the claims of another great explorer to whom we owe the discovery of North America are apt to be forgotten. Sir Clement Markham's paper recently read before the Royal Geographical Society entitled 'The Fourth Centenary of the Voyage of

John Cabot, 1497,' will help to keep green the memory of one who deserves much honour. John Cabot was probably a Genoese; but he became a Venetian citizen, and subsequently went to Spain, where he heard of the achievements of Columbus. Ultimately he came to England, where letters patent were granted him by Henry VII. to fit out ships under the English flag to discover new lands. To Bristol he went and fitted out one small vessel called the *Mathew*, which was manned by Bristol sailors, and sailed from that port on May 3, 1497. The voyage proved to be the first successful expedition of discovery which sailed from an English port, and as a result the Dominion of Canada, Newfoundland, the United States, and all the people of English origin on the Western Continent must regard John Cabot as their Columbus. A tablet to his memory has just been inaugurated at the Legislative Hall at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

It has been known for many years that there are effective means of rendering wood and textile fabrics fireproof, but probably on account of some little extra expense, or the trouble involved, these methods of protection are left in abeyance. Then there will come some terrible disaster like the burning of the bazaar at Paris, and for a time interest is aroused in precautionary measures. We are just now passing through one of these periods, and attention is being turned to various methods of rendering combustible things fireproof. A large company assembled recently on a piece of waste ground in London to see a wooden building rapidly consumed, while a similar erection built of wood which had been subjected to particular treatment withstood all efforts to burn it down. The process is said to consist in replacing the natural juices of the wood by certain chemical substances which are forced into its pores at a high temperature. An exhibition has recently been held in the Metropolis by the United Asbestos Company in order to show how moulded decorations of all kinds can now be made which refuse to take fire even when submitted to the strongest flame. It would therefore seem that a house can now be built of absolutely fireproof materials.

The Duke of Bedford has taken the public into his confidence, and, under the title of *A Great Agricultural Estate* (John Murray), has told the story of the origin and administration of his estates of Woburn and Thorney. At the same time he has also given the results of the Experimental Fruit Farm at Woburn. The result is disappointing as a proof that such great estates can always be made to pay, for it shows 'that rent had disappeared, not only from Thorney, but also from the Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire estates, and that the possession of these properties, even after excluding all expenditure on the abbey, park, and farm at Woburn, now involved upon their owner a heavy annual loss.' Adverse seasons, low prices, remission of rent, and heavy land taxation, and the difficulty of getting good hired labour, all figure as drawbacks. The story of the great Bedford Level is again retold, how at a cost of more than £100,000 much land was reclaimed from the inroads of the sea. The average net income from the Thorney Estate for the past twenty years, even without taking death-duties into account, is only equal to 2½ per cent. interest

on the capital outlay on new works. The only pleasure and real profit derived from such ownership, the Duke assures us, is the kindly feeling which has existed between his tenants and the inhabitants of Thorney town, and the fact that a pretty village has been evolved out of the dreary waste of fens, and that crime and pauperism have practically disappeared. On Thorney the expenditure from 1816 to 1895 amounted to £1,598,353, and on Woburn £2,632,186. Thus, after spending nearly four and a quarter millions sterling since 1816 on some 51,643 acres of land, a large proportion of which is some of the best wheat land in England, and after excluding all expenditure on Woburn Abbey, its park, and farm, at the present time an annual loss of more than £7000 a year is entailed on their owner. The percentage on cottage outlay (1890-95) is 0.24 per cent.; but about 7000 persons are comfortably housed in 1803 cottages of good sanitary construction. Some small holdings on the Thorney Estate have, however, been an undoubted success.

The Woburn Experimental Farm is a mile from Ridgmont Station on the London and North-Western Railway. From 1877 to 1896 the total cost has been £16,379, or £885 per acre. The Woburn Fruit Farm was started in 1895 in conjunction with Spencer Pickering, F.R.S., and its purpose is to supply a model of what a fruit farm should be; while sixty experiments have been made with fruit trees as to different methods of planting, pruning, and manuring. Apple trees are most abundant, and the whole twenty acres is already planted. The annual cost of the farm is about £500, and it is worked by a resident manager and a staff of seven or eight men and boys. All those interested in the experiment are made welcome to a sight of the farm. There is also a farm school for instruction in farm practice, at Warren Farm, Ridgmont.

THE MAN OF CULTURE IN LOVE.

THIS witch of modern days,
Secure of all men's praise,
Laughs at the critic's gaze,
Arts analytic:
One kneels before a shrine
To worship, not refine,
And when I come to mine,
Dieth the critic.

That Love makes all men blind
My scientific mind
Is half-ashamed to find
Like some before me;
And yet this question dread
At times flits through my head—
'When we are fairly wed,
Will she not bore me?'

For all her mind lies waste,
And, save in dress, her taste
In no degree is based
On higher culture;
Recondite things of art
I labour to impart
In vain—my words depart
To swift sepulture.

Once when I brought from town
A book of Browning's down
And read to her, a frown
Puckered her forehead;
'Twas on that very day
I heard her lightly say—
(It took my breath away)—
'Poets are horrid.'

I point her to the best,
She answers with a jest,
Says she can but digest
A mental jelly!
So finds her choicest food
In Mrs Henry Wood,
And loves in every mood
Marie Corelli.

When Bach or Mendelssohn
Like Jove is thundering on,
With many a stifled yawn
Her lips are twitching;
But at Chevalier's song
Her laugh is loud and long.
And can a laugh be wrong
That's so bewitching?

Her simple creed and bold
In Art (Oh heavens!) would hold
All bad, *per se*, that's old,
All good that's recent;
Phil May outweighs, in fact,
With her, a gallery packed
With 'masters old and cracked,
And hardly decent.'

I aim to teach and miss,
She stops me with a kiss;
If unconvinced by this,
With some soft menace:
We drift through lover's nooks
Of talk, we drop from books
To chatter of her looks,
From art to tennis.

She is Love's poem writ
In flesh and blood, and yet
(Let me but whisper it)
The least bit stupid.
Well, Love will have his way,
If at some future day
She bores me, I shall lay
The blame on Cupid.

WALTER HOGG.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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MR POTTER'S SPEECH.

By JAMES WORKMAN.

CHAPTER I.

'MR CHAIRMAN, ladies and gentlemen,' said Mr Potter for the third time.

'Sit down,' shouted one of the audience.

'Go on,' cried a second.

'Hear, hear,' screamed a third.

The cracked voice of a youth at the back of the hall inquired affectionately if Mr Potter's mother was aware that he was absent from home, and the question was followed by a roar of laughter, a storm of hisses, a volley of groans, and shouts of 'Turn him out, turn him out.'

'Order, order,' cried the exasperated chairman, hoarse with indignation, and bewildered with the noise and excitement. 'If Mr Potter persists in this disgraceful conduct, the audience cannot possibly go on.'

Shouts of laughter greeted this unfortunate slip of the tongue, interspersed with cries of

'Order, order.'

'Chair, chair.'

'Sit down.'

'Go on.'

'Hear, hear.'

Hats waved, hands clapped, sticks and umbrellas pounded the floor. And in the midst of this outrageous uproar, his bald head, and large fat face, crimson with rage, his prominent fishy eyes glaring behind his gold spectacles, one hand thrust into the bosom of his frock-coat, the other vainly attempting by a benedictory gesture to calm the passions of the multitude, stood the unfortunate Mr Potter, the orator of the evening. In order that the tragic nature of the situation may be clearly understood, it is necessary to explain that Mr Potter had acquired a considerable local reputation as a brilliant impromptu speaker. When he posed in a dignified attitude upon a public platform, and rolled forth his majestic

sentences in a rich bass voice, the inhabitants of Westbeach were almost as proud of him as he was of himself. They little guessed with what laborious effort those sonorous periods were elaborated and committed to memory. Could they have seen him standing before the mirror in his library in precisely the same attitude, rehearsing his sparkling impromptus to the ornaments on the mantelpiece, the charm of his oratory would have vanished for ever. He was morbidly conscious of this, and nervously afraid that by some unlucky chance the truth would sooner or later become known. It is a serious thing to obtain the reputation of being a fluent and ready speaker. Behind him who, in the solitude of his library, carefully elaborates the 'good things' with which he subsequently astonishes the public, ever stalks, like a shadow, the fear of being found out. At every public meeting when he is unprepared to speak he sits on pins and needles, trembling lest the chairman's eye should wander in his direction or some injudicious admirer call upon him for a speech. He feels instinctively that under such circumstances he would ignominiously collapse. Moreover, there are generally a few who have found him out, and he masks his humiliation with a sickly smile when he sees them listening to his glib and sparkling periods with impassive faces. Hitherto Mr Potter had evaded detection with singular good fortune. This night, however, he appeared as a candidate for the District Council, and as he strenuously opposed the construction of a Marine Park on the flat monotonous foreshore, a project enthusiastically advocated by many of the inhabitants, he met, for almost the first time in his career, with a violently hostile reception. But though amazed and bewildered, he held his ground with a courage that was little short of

heroic. At every lull in the tempest he began again.

'Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen'—

'Sit down,' shrieked his opponents.

'Go on,' shouted his supporters.

'Order, order,' reiterated the chairman.

So the tempest of sound would break out again, and Potter would become inaudible once more. But he stubbornly refused to give in. The speech he had prepared for that evening was his *magnum opus*, and was intended to place him in the front rank of public orators. To the aspiring Potter, a seat in the District Council was but a stepping-stone to higher things. Might not an epoch-making oration reported at full length in the *Westbeach Times* find its way into the columns of the metropolitan prototype of that influential journal? Before the meeting had commenced, Mr Potter had, in imagination, already received an urgent telegram from the prime minister requesting him as a personal favour to contest the next parliamentary vacancy. And this was the end of it all!

Almost frantic with indignation, besmeared with eggs and flour, for missiles were beginning to fly about the hall, he stood doggedly on the platform, striving with the pertinacity of despair to recite his priceless oration in the teeth of the shouts and groans and hisses of the excited audience. He would, no doubt, have struggled through it word for word in spite of all that man or fate could do to stop him, if the chairman, exasperated beyond endurance, had not interfered, and peremptorily closed the meeting. No words can describe the mortification of the humiliated orator. In every glance and gesture of the friends who surrounded him and did their best to make light of his defeat, he could perceive, with an anguish too deep for expression, that his reputation as a public speaker had received a disastrous check.

'You mustn't attach any importance to these disgraceful proceedings, my dear sir,' remarked Sir Joseph Maxwell, the chairman, soothingly. 'It's some abominable trick of that vulgar fellow Jones. A man like that would stick at nothing.'

Jones was the opposition candidate, a revolutionary fanatic in the eyes of those who wished to preserve the aristocratic exclusiveness of *Westbeach*.

'Yes; I expect Jones is at the bottom of it,' murmured Potter, who seemed half-stupefied by the ordeal through which he had just passed.

'My carriage is outside,' continued Sir Joseph. 'You might expose yourself to a good deal of insolence if you walked home before the streets are clear. Come with me. We'll have a glass of wine and a cigar, and talk matters over.'

The crestfallen orator assented, and was driven to *Westbeach Hall*, where his kindly host succeeded to some extent in smoothing down his ruffled plumage.

Eventually Sir Joseph changed the theme of conversation with the hope of diverting the current of Mr Potter's thoughts.

'Is it true, by the way, that your daughter is engaged to young Wilde? You won't mind my asking the question? I heard a rumour to that effect.'

Mr Potter hesitated.

'The fact is, Sir Joseph, it's rather a painful

subject. They are not engaged as yet, and unless I change my mind very much they never will be. Of course they are what is called in love with each other, and it really places me in a very awkward situation. Jack Wilde is the son of a cousin of mine, an orphan, you know, and that sort of thing, so I can't exactly shut the door in his face; and Katie—well, you have daughters yourself, Sir Joseph, and understand these matters—Katie has a will of her own, I assure you.'

'Yes,' rejoined Sir Joseph feelingly, 'I understand the situation perfectly. The young fellow has literary aspirations, I believe? Not a very profitable occupation, I'm afraid.'

'Hardly,' said Mr Potter grimly. He had made his own money by speculating in bacon and lard. 'He's serving a sort of apprenticeship on a local paper; gets fifteen shillings a week, I believe. Of course the fellow has a private income and expectations as well, or I should have put my foot down long ago.'

'Which paper does he write for?'

'The *Westbeach Times*. Good Heavens!'

'Why, what's the matter?'

Mr Potter had suddenly turned crimson and jumped from his seat.

'Oh, nothing, nothing,' he answered confusedly. 'The fact is, I've forgotten a most important engagement. Why, bless my soul, it's after twelve o'clock. You'll excuse me, Sir Joseph. I—I haven't a moment to lose. I must go at once. Good-night.'

Sir Joseph followed his retreating figure with puzzled eyes which gradually began to twinkle slyly.

'There'll be some fun in the morning, I expect,' he chuckled to himself. 'I didn't see Wilde at the meeting, and I can guess now how it comes about that the *Westbeach Times* always reports Potter's speeches in full. I fancy he has more reasons than one for not giving young Wilde the cold shoulder. I always thought that there was something fishy about Potter's fluency. I'll guarantee he wrote out every word of that speech and learnt it off by heart. Yes, by Jove, I see it all. Wilde, for some reason or other, couldn't be present, and Potter gave him the manuscript. Let me see, this is Friday night. Why, it'll be in print by now. Potter will be the laughing-stock of the neighbourhood. I'm sorry for him; but if it takes a little bit of the conceit out of him, it won't do him any harm.'

We are all human, and Sir Joseph, who as an orator had been eclipsed by Potter, couldn't help chuckling at the prospect of his rival's discomfiture.

'Brown,' he said to the butler, 'just see that a *Westbeach Times* is sent up to me first thing in the morning.'

Sir Joseph had gauged the situation exactly. Wilde had called on Mr Potter early in the evening to inform him that he couldn't possibly be present at the meeting, and Mr Potter, with the usual injunctions to secrecy, had solemnly entrusted the precious manuscript to his care. Stupefied by the disastrous collapse of the meeting, the unfortunate orator had completely forgotten this circumstance until Sir Joseph's question had awakened his slumbering memory.

At a speed that appeared almost incredible, considering the size of his waistcoat, he flew in

the direction of Jack's lodgings, hoping against hope that he might even yet be in time to stop the publication of his unlucky speech. The perspiration burst out in great beads on his forehead whenever he thought of what would occur if it appeared in the paper next morning. Nobody would spare him. Friend and foe alike would chuckle at his downfall. He had so invariably made a point of suggesting that he was unprepared. The erasures and interpolations in his manuscripts proved only too plainly with what patient deliberation he elaborated his impromptu; and yet he usually suggested that he had not come to the meeting with the intention of speaking, but rather of listening to those who were better qualified to deal with the subject than himself. This magnanimous humility generally evoked a round of applause, the clapping of hands, and thumping of sticks, always sweeter to the well-developed ears of Mr Potter than the music of the sirens. On the following Saturday, the other speeches would appear in the local paper considerably boiled down, while Mr Potter's would be reported verbatim. These are the sort of things that no competitor ever forgives. How would his enemies rejoice! How would his rivals triumph!

As he resolved these thoughts, he swept along at full speed, and turning a corner, came into violent collision with some one going in the opposite direction.

'Where the—that is to say, I beg your pardon,' he gasped.

'I'm sure I beg yours. No bones broken, I hope?'

Then by the gas-lamp just above they recognised each other.

'Oh!' exclaimed Potter.

'Ah!' exclaimed Jones.

Then Potter with an angry gesture darted away, and Jones stood watching him with a wide grin.

'Seems a bit put out,' he murmured, rubbing his hands together as he turned and walked on. 'Didn't expect such a lively meeting, I suppose. I've put a spoke in your wheel, Potter, my boy. Just wait till the day after the election, and you'll sing small, very small indeed, or my name's not Jones.'

Mr Potter knew that it was not in the least probable that Jack, who loved to read and smoke by his fire till the small hours of the morning, would be in bed. He was therefore not surprised to see his light still burning. Attired in a shabby old dressing-gown, with a well-seasoned briar between his lips, he answered Potter's ring in person. The appearance of his dignified relative at that unseasonable hour struck him speechless, and he made way for him in silence.

'I've come for the notes of my speech,' gasped Mr Potter, sinking into a chair, and wiping the perspiration from his brow. He used the formula which Jack had adopted for letting his self-important relative down as easily as possible. Jack always spoke of Potter's painfully elaborated manuscript as 'notes,' and Potter accepted the euphemism with palpable relief.

Jack stared at him in astonishment.

'The notes of your speech!' he exclaimed. 'Why, it's in print long ago!'

'Then you must get it out of print!' shouted Potter.

'Get it out of print!' repeated Jack, who began to think that his relative's mind was affected.

Potter whisked out his cheque-book, signed a blank cheque, tore it out, and threw it across the table.

'Is the editor at the office still?' he asked.

'Yes, he won't have gone home yet.'

'Well, go to him at once. Tell him that every copy of the paper containing my speech must be destroyed on the spot, and fill up the cheque for any reasonable sum he may demand as compensation.'

'But I don't understand. Why is your speech not to appear?'

'Because I never made it, you young idiot. I tell you the hall was packed with all the rag-tag and bob-tail of the neighbourhood, yelling and howling like a set of escaped lunatics. Don't stand there with your mouth open. Are you going, or must I go myself?'

'Oh, I'll go—but'—

'But, what's the matter now? Will the editor object?'

'Not he. The sight of the cheque will remove any objections he might have.'

'Well, why do you hesitate? Out with it.'

'The fact is, I brought a copy away with me.'

'Give it me at once. Where is it?'

'It's in the pillar-box at the end of the road. I posted it five minutes ago.'

'You posted it. Not to any one in the neighbourhood?'

'Well, I'm afraid it was.'

'Who was it?'

'It'll be all right,' answered Jack evasively.

'I'll get it back in the morning and take it round to you.'

'Tell me the name of the man you sent it to,' stormed Potter.

But Jack, now fully awake to the situation, and appalled at the prospect of Potter's indignation when he knew the truth, remained speechless.

'Why don't you speak?' shouted Potter. Then he suddenly sprang to his feet, and struck the table a sounding thwack with his fist.

'Ah! I see it all. You're in the plot, are you? You're one of them, eh? You knew the meeting was going to be broken up, and so you called for my speech and pretended you couldn't be present in order to have an excuse for printing it, did you? And you've sent Jones a copy of the paper to make a fool of me, have you? But I'll be even with you. Show your face in my house again and I'll have you turned out by the police. You shall never set eyes on Katie again if I have to send her to a convent. I'll—I'll'—

'If you'll allow me to get a word in edgewise,' interposed Jack, 'I shall soon convince you that you are doing me a great injustice. I did send the paper to Jones, I admit that, but not for the reasons you suggest. Jones had undertaken to get up a temperance concert at Farmwood. A lot of his private friends took part in it, and he was in the chair, and I promised to give him a good line, and send him a paper by the early morning post. Farmwood, as you know, is half-a-dozen miles away, and I didn't get back till late. I hadn't the least idea that anything had gone wrong at the meeting until you told me so yourself.'

'So you say,' retorted Potter, who, by this time, was hardly responsible for his speech or actions; 'but I shall have my own opinion of the matter until you place that paper in my hands. Even if what you say is true, you were neglecting your duty in going off to a trumpery concert instead of being present at the meeting; and if you suppose you are going to make me the laughing-stock of the neighbourhood with impunity, you make a very great mistake, I can assure you. Now understand, unless you have every paper at the office destroyed, and get that copy back from Jones before he has time to do any mischief with it, you shall never enter my house again.'

After delivering this ultimatum with extraordinary emphasis, Mr Potter put on his hat and departed.

'Well, this is a nice how-d'y-e-do,' said Jack blankly. 'I strongly suspect that Jones has been fooling me. He must have guessed that Potter wrote out his speeches, and would supply me with the manuscript, when he badgered me into going to that confounded concert. Well, I expect there'll be some fun in the morning whether I get that paper back or not. If it weren't for Katie I shouldn't object to see Potter taken down a peg or two. It would do him good. He needs it.'

PROSPECTS OF AN ENGLISHMAN IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

BY A MAN ON THE SPOT.

MANY able works have been published dealing with the prospects of young Englishmen who choose the United States as their initial field of labour in the battle of life, and at the time they were compiled doubtless these manuals formed a true index to affairs on this side of the Atlantic.

It must always be borne in mind that this is a comparatively new country, and that much of it west of the Missouri state line has only been settled some twenty-five years. It is thus evident that the conditions of life change to a radical degree not only from year to year, but almost from day to day, and therefore what was sound-advice five years ago may be entirely misleading to-day.

The object of this short sketch is to give a few practical hints to parents, guardians, and any young fellows who think of trying their luck in the States.

First and foremost, I have a piece of advice for the man who has a little money, and can do a little of two or three things rather nicely, and would like to get an easy billet—*Stay at home*, young man; in Europe you can loaf scientifically for one-tenth of the cost of loafing here, and three times as comfortably. You can also be appreciated at your proper value in an old country—the Yankees will have no use for you.

Now a word to parents and guardians who, without a large outlay, wish to place boys in a position in which they can help themselves. The

idea of a country gentleman usually is to put a boy on a farm and eventually buy him one.

Farming in England and farming in the States are two very different things. I am not now dealing with the case of young men who have several thousand pounds of capital, but with those who, including their passage-money, are to have from £100 to £500 as their start.

Now, parents and guardians all, for the love of common sense, begin by putting your pride in your pockets—the boy will find that he must sink his to succeed; and before your charge leaves England let him learn some trade thoroughly, and go right away West.

Don't, for heaven's sake, try and make a farmer of him. It is the hardest work in the country, and beyond the shadow of a doubt the least remunerative. The worry and anxiety is never-ceasing, and the prospects of the simple agriculturist in this country grow blacker every day. He has not only to contend with bad seasons and poor crops, but the railroads are going to beat him every time he tries to get his produce to market.

Another pitfall to guard against is the specious prospect offered by those sharks, usually with unimpeachable references, who offer to take 'farm pupils,' and who promise all the comforts of English country-life and paying work in the future.

If the boy *will* be a farmer, in spite of advice, and wishes to tame the fiery mustang, better to let him make up his mind to hard work and roughing it at once, and to go and hire out as a farm-hand, thus learning his business from men who understand it, and are not amateurs who, failing to make a legitimate living out of the soil, farm human flesh and blood in the shape of pupils.

As a pupil he will pay £50 to £100 for a year. If the former amount, he will be worked twice as hard as any farm-hand, and will have food and quarters that the paid man would absolutely refuse; if the latter amount, he will be encouraged to develop into a loafer and divide his time between lawn tennis, shooting, polo, and riding into the nearest town, where he is pretty sure to get into mischief.

In either case, at the end of his period of tuition, if he means to stick to farming, he will find that he has still almost everything to learn; and if he has sense and grit he will do what he should have done in the first place, and hire out to the best farmer in the neighbourhood.

Farm-work is hard and pay small, varying according to the state from twelve dollars to twenty-five dollars a month, with free board and lodging.

In the summer any able-bodied man can get a job with the current rate of wages as soon as he can hitch up his horses, ride a little, drive, plough, mow, and know how to take to pieces and re-piece the various farming implements in use. On some farms the *boys* take it in turn to be *woman*, and cook and do the housework.

As a general rule, the routine is, roughly—turn out just before daybreak; feed, water, and partially harness your team, or feed the cattle; come in to breakfast, and at sun up go out and

plough, mow, or work on the farm until noon; dinner and a pipe, then work till 7.30; feed your horses and cattle, supper, bed down your horses and lock up, amuse yourself and turn in when you like. No work on Sunday except to feed and water.

The beginner who is new at the work may possibly have to take somewhat less than the current wages until he catches on, and some winters, after a bad harvest, lots of hands are only too glad to work for keep.

Ranching in the territories has seen its palmiest days, civilisation is steadily creeping onwards, and settling lands where the cattleman used to range with his herds.

At best the life of a cowboy is a very hard one. The writer tried it for a time and liked it; but the constant exposure, sleeping out all weathers, month in and month out, the twelve to twenty hours daily in the saddle, and the almost unchanging diet of bacon, coffee, and biscuit three times a day will wear out any but the very strongest constitutions. The price of cattle moreover is down and the cost of pasture away up, so that a man has to figure to a very close margin when he has allowed for losses from drought, death, and disease, and he must have considerable money invested to see the prospect of a fair income ahead. Cowboys get from thirty-five dollars to sixty dollars a month.

Now, parents and guardians, and more especially young men on your own hook, don't cut up rough when I advise you not to buy any swagger new clothes or expensive guns or saddlery. Keep the money in your pocket and put it in a National Bank on deposit as soon as you arrive.

Bring out all the old clothes you have, the stuff is better than you can get here for any reasonable price, and at manual labour everything wears out or becomes moth-eaten.

Swagger riding-breeches are all very well if you have them, but you will find yourself far more comfortable on a Mexican saddle if you have on a thick pair of ordinary trousers with jeans or leather chapporals over them.

A hunting-saddle does not serve on the prairies where going is rough, distances long, your pony unbroken and very likely a buckjumper at that; you need something solid to sit on, to which you can suspend the necessities for a day or two, as well as your blanket and wet weather "slicker." Your old riding boots are all very well to wear out, but you will then find that you prefer those of the country, made with a 'horse-thief' heel some three inches high, which is not liable to slip through the wide wooden or iron stirrup that forms part of your big 45 to 74 lb. weight Mexican or punching saddle.

These saddles ease a horse, as they distribute the weight evenly over his whole back, and a good one does not even gall with an awkward rider, whilst a horseman can do fully double as much work in them without fatigue as he can in the best English saddle ever built.

Let us suppose that our boy has tried farming for a reasonable period, and is satisfied that there is not enough in it to justify him in sticking to it. I can only hope that this may reach the eyes of such an one, to whom I give a piece of good advice. Before settling down, see as much of the States as you can in every direction. Don't let

your travelling be at your own expense; if no other means offers itself, get work as a train hand.

You will first go as assistant brakeman on a freight train, and will receive about forty to fifty dollars a month. After a time you will be promoted and in turn fill various billets, such as baggage-man or 'smasher' on a passenger train, freight and passenger brakeman, and then conductor. If you like your prospects railroading, your next move is starter, and then district superintendent, &c.

Railroad pay out here is good in all the practical branches; a conductor, who fills much the same position as our guard, but with far more responsibility, receives from one hundred to one hundred and fifty dollars a month, with numerous perquisites in addition. There is a sort of free-masonry amongst railroad men, and they have a countersign, changed each year, that passes them over any line in the States if they board the train anywhere except at a terminus, where tickets are examined at a barrier.

For the lad who does not like the idea of railroading, but wishes to see the country, a good plan is to go to some great city and apply for work as a 'drummer' or commercial traveller. These jobs are fairly well paid and not difficult to obtain if a man be of good address and appearance and a fair talker.

Of course in England the squire or parson's son would not like taking this sort of work; but in the West 'drummers' are looked upon as the salt of the earth, and are well treated wherever they go. In hotels they have everything their own way, and landlords can't do enough for them.

Should the boy ever find himself in a strange place, dead-broke (which is quite possible), his first idea is to see if he can find a fellow-countryman, feeling sure that he can get advice and possibly a leg-up.

Let him put this idea on one side at once. Englishmen in the States look on all other Englishmen with suspicion, unless they come with good letters of introduction from common friends; they always have a lurking suspicion (frequently verified) that the new-comer is here for his country's good.

Better by far go to an entire stranger. Ask who are the most prominent men in the town, get them all pointed out to you, and having made up your mind as to which is your huckleberry, go to him like a little man and tell him all the facts of the case; let him understand that you know his support is all you need to get an opening, and if he sees that you are willing to work the probability is he will find you something to start at. This is all any man needs, and the rest depends on himself.

In the States never wait for an introduction. Successful men here are not difficult of access, and it is a curious fact that they are nearly always flattered at any one wishing to make their acquaintance, and will generally find a little spare time to give to a stranger, especially if he be a foreigner out of luck.

The footing of Englishmen in the States is somewhat peculiar. In the East they are made a great deal of if they are properly vouched for, especially if they have any sort of title or belong

to a well-known family; but the *has been* is accorded but a sorry welcome, and until he drops his spurious swagger has a very bad time.

Chicago is the happy hunting-ground of the Irish and German, but it is a case of 'no English need apply.' At the present moment it is the hardest city in the Union in which to obtain work at even starvation wages. The 'World's Fair' brought men from all states and countries, and there is not work for one new arrival in ten.

The labour question is the problem of the age, and not only puzzles the student of economics in your big cities, but tries the soul of the agricultural bosses. I have visited large farming tracts in the North-west, South-west, and Far West, and have a good insight into the conditions that prevail there as well as in the interior of several New England states.

There are hungry hordes of unemployed men and women in every large city in the land—thirty thousand in Chicago alone, and probably fully as many here in New York. The same holds good proportionately in other cities. Not the same persons all the time perhaps, but an average—some working to-day and some to-morrow, for a few weeks or a few months; another set being idle while these have work, and so on. When we consider the still greater number who labour at a recompense so slender that it merely serves to keep body and soul together, who live practically in perpetual bondage to their daily necessities, this view is appalling.

As a matter of cold fact, there is employment to-day for every able-bodied man and woman in the United States—remunerative employment. There is more territory and more enterprise suffering to-day for want of labourers than there is territory over-crowded or enterprise over-supplied. There are vast sections of this country where it is actually impossible to obtain help, male or female, and where that is, we have arrested development.

I know it to be a fact that within twelve hours of Chicago enough help cannot be obtained to carry on farming operations. There are no farm hands to be had, although homes and good pay are offered on yearly contracts.

There are no house servants to be hired for love or money, and the well-to-do are obliged to do their own washing and other housework. The absence of help is as marked in all the western small towns as in the country. I believe there is some sort of employment and a home for every man, woman, and child in this country who can do something.

The trouble is just as it is with contracts, the question of exchange. People are freezing to death within a few hours of coal regions, whilst other people are starving here while corn is being burned for fuel in Kansas. Our grain rots in the shock for want of help to garner it, while thirty thousand hungry mouths and twice as many idle hands are within a few hours' travel of our fields.

The high daily wages of manufacturing centres drains the country of young men, and once there they will never return. Their children would rather live in garrets in the city than go on a farm and plough and plant and do housework.

The real labour problem is to equalise things, to draw off the surplus from the congested points

and spread it over the deficient spots. If the so-called labour-leaders and humanitarians could work harmoniously and earnestly together to that end the labour problem might be solved. I don't say it could be accomplished without the co-operation of labour, for it could not.

In the States good mechanics are everywhere in demand at high wages; their working day is eight hours if they be *union* men, and for overtime and night-work they receive a price and a half. Bricklayers and stonemasons earn from four to seven dollars a day according to locality, and plasterers from three to five dollars; carpenters vary all the way from two dollars fifty cents up to fourteen dollars in the high points of the Rockies. Blacksmiths earn from three dollars fifty cents to seven dollars and whatever they like to ask in mining districts. A young fellow of good education has the certainty of a competence and the possibility of a fortune if he sink pride and spend two years or so in learning to be a practical carpenter or bricklayer, and study domestic architecture.

The whole country is being built up, frame-houses in outlying districts are giving way to brick and stone edifices, and there is a lucrative field open to thousands of young fellows to come out here and work their way to being builders and contractors. It is a pleasant life, with a great future, and in most states there are to be found hundreds of places that give a good opening for the educated man who will buy all his own supplies and be his own architect, superintendent, foreman, boss carpenter, boss bricklayer, and, in a word, factotum. The very best employé cannot be as solicitous to carry out a contract as the man who is going to earn the profit or stand the loss. A man need not be deterred because he has no capital; reputations are quickly made and credit easily obtained by straightforward working men; and I do not hesitate to say that there are few banks in this country unwilling to advance the needful money to carry out a contract undertaken by a man who can fulfil his end.

If things are not working well with you at first, do not let any one know it, but just put on a bold face and keep altogether to business; the more work a contractor does himself the less he has to pay some one else, and the greater is the extra gain.

Before setting up in business carefully study the question of buying, as on that very much depends your future gain. It is an easy matter to sell what has a market value; and a careful business man with a clear head will be found in possession of nothing that has not an immediate saleable and mortgageable quotation in the local market.

Above all things, never abuse the United States. If you do not like the country, after all it is at your own wish that you remain here, and it is the very worst form to come to a country, make a living in it, and then abuse it. Americans are very patriotic, and no one can deny that they have reason to be proud of their wonderful country and the progress it has made through American enterprise and perseverance. A man can like forty countries and still love his own no less; so do not fall into the error of imagining that disparaging remarks about the Stars and Stripes reflect any credit upon the Union Jack; they

show rather the bad taste and ignorance of the person from whom they emanate, and stand effectually between him and success in the United States.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

By FRED WHISHAW.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THROUGHOUT this melancholy period of friendlessness and solitude, undoubtedly the brightest moments of poor Philipof's existence were those spent by him in the society of his small nephew and niece. The boy, Petka (which is the familiar form of Piotr, or Peter, which name had been bestowed upon him instead of either Vladimir or Alexander), was by this time in his sixth year, and a fine little specimen of humanity. He had developed a great fondness for his 'uncle' Sasha, who was to him the incarnation of all the virtues; for Philipof was never tired of playing with him or of entertaining him with stirring tales of the battles and marches and adventures by flood and field in which he himself had taken a part. Petka would sit upon his knee and listen for hours, or for as long as Sasha's breath or leisure held out, and it is scarcely a matter for surprise that the hero of so many of the adventures should have become the hero *par excellence* of all heroes in the eyes of the child. Among other tales, Philipof (very unwisely, but finding perhaps some relief for the soreness of his heart in speaking about that which for ever lay uppermost in it, even to a child) told little Petka the story of how some one—he did not go so far as to mention names—once saved the life of a Tsar by jogging the elbow of an assassin; and how the Tsar, fancying that this poor man was the would-be murderer instead of his preserver, clapped him into prison when he should have loaded him with honours. Little Petka wept bitterly over this story, but asked for it over and over again nevertheless; and the tale made the deepest impression upon his juvenile imagination. If Sasha could have foreseen the effect upon his mind which was brought about by this oft-repeated tale, and its influence in future years upon the life of this child, it is quite certain that he would have bitten his tongue out rather than have thus sown the seeds of a poisonous growth in that impressionable soil. As the immediate result of the story, little Petka would flush red with indignation, and declare that he hated the Tsar, and when he was a big man he would find him out and tell him how base he was to do such a thing to the poor officer; whereat Philipof laughed and patted his bright head and said that this was all ancient history.

'Are they both dead then?' asked the child, with sorrowful, sympathetic eyes.

'Dead and buried and forgotten, years and years and years ago!' said Uncle Sasha.

'And was it never found out how good and noble the officer was, and how base and cruel and horrid the king was?' continued Petka.

'No,' said this indiscreet historian, 'it never was; and the poor officer died a beggar, or starved to death in prison—I forget which—and the Tsar

grew fat, and lived happily for years and years, and then died amid the tears of a grateful and admiring people.'

'And are Tsars always bad and cruel like that?' asked Petka, with tears in his eyes. 'Is this one that father is always with?'

Philipof was a little alarmed by the effect which his story had produced upon the child's imagination, and hastened to assure him that, for all he knew, the present Tsar might be the best of men; probably he was, since Petka's own father was deeply devoted to him.

'I don't believe he is, a bit,' said the boy, 'or he would let father come and see Olga and me oftener. I think he is a bad man, and I hate him.'

'Who told you that he prevented your father coming to see you and Olga?' asked Uncle Sasha, surprised.

'Matrona,' said the boy; 'she says father never came to see mother either, and that it's all the Tsar's fault; and I hate the Tsar, Uncle Sasha, and I love you ever so much better than father, and so does Olga.'

It appeared, then, that poor Petka was subject to other indiscreet influences at home besides that of his Uncle Sasha.

It was scarcely a matter for wonder that the children should prefer their uncle to their father, however; for the last-named so rarely visited his family at this time that the little ones were practically strangers to him and he to them. Dostoiief was not unkind to them on the rare occasions of his visits, and took care that Matrona should provide them with the best of everything that money could purchase; but there was no real sympathy between father and children, which is one of the few things that money cannot buy; and though the children resented the long intervals which their father permitted to elapse between his visits to them, thanks to old Matrona's indiscreet remarks on the subject, yet they rather disliked than enjoyed those visits when they did actually take place. So that when Petka declared that he loved his uncle infinitely better than his father, he was only expressing what was undoubtedly the case, and what both children had many times in solemn domestic conclave confessed to one another with bated breath to be unmistakably the condition of their affections.

One evening, as Philipof sat with both children upon his knee, engaged as usual in drawing for their entertainment from the storehouse of his imagination, the door opened, and Dostoiief suddenly entered the room. This was his first visit for upwards of a month, and he was entirely unexpected. Apparently the spectacle of Philipof sitting comfortably in his apartment, with his children perched upon the knee of a suspected regicide, was equally unexpected and distasteful to Dostoiief, for he started as his eye fell upon the little domestic picture, and his face flushed angrily.

'Heavens,' he said aloud, 'it never occurred to me that you would have the audacity to show yourself here! Leave the room, children, and go to bed.' Olga slipped down from her uncle's knee, and proceeded to obey her father, walking slowly to the door and crying quietly; the boy paused. 'You'll come again, soon, won't you,

Uncle Sasha,' he said, 'and finish telling me that story?'

'There will be no more stories from this gentleman, Petka,' said Dostoief; 'he is not coming here again.'

Petka burst into tears. 'Oh, Uncle Sasha, is it true?' he cried. 'Please, please say it isn't true; are you going away?'

'No, dear; I am not going away,' said Philipof, 'and I shall come and see you again very soon; your father is making a mistake. Now run away to bed.'

Petka disappeared, and the discussion that forthwith ensued in the nursery made still more clear the fact that of the two men known to the children, the uncle was undoubtedly the favourite and the father nowhere.

Meanwhile the two men in the drawing-room stood a moment in silence, and watched one another. Both were violently agitated, and could scarcely trust themselves to speak. Dostoief was the first to break the silence.

'I suppose,' he said, 'that I ought not to be surprised to see you here; probably you are capable by this time of any audacity, and I might have known you better. Of course this will be your last visit to my house; you will understand that your presence here is impossible—we need not enter into details and reasons—and your society and influence cannot for a moment be permitted to my children. I should have forbidden my servants to admit you if it had occurred to me that you could be so wanting in the commonest good feeling as to demand admittance into this house. They shall have their orders in future. It is useless to mince matters; you will have the sense to see that there is no other course open to me.'

Philipof was very pale; but for once in his life he did not fly into one of his usual paroxysms of rage.

'Dostoief,' he said, quietly enough, 'it would be foolish to plead innocence before you, because your mind is already made up in this matter, I know; but your wife believed me innocent, and in that belief she left me as a solemn legacy the duty of looking after your children, whom you disgracefully neglect, as you are well aware. Let me tell you this: I have more respect for the wishes of my dead cousin, as expressed in this letter, which you can read if you like, than for a hundred million commands of yours—enforced if you will by ookazes from your master, and by all the terrors of the fortress-prison. So long as I am free and able to go where I will, I shall find means to see Olga's children, whether you bid the servants refuse me admittance or not. I see you are reading her last letter to me. You will find mention of another obligation bequeathed to me as a legacy by your wife—namely, to refrain from laying my hands upon your person; you may now comprehend how it is that you remain unchastised for your conduct towards your wife and her little children. Were it not for Olga's letter I should have beaten you like a dog long before this.'

'Come, come; this matter can be settled without vulgar boasting and threatening,' said the other; 'enough said. Take your letter. My poor wife was easily convinced of your innocence; as for the children, my will as the living parent

must of course override the wishes of their dead mother, expressed under a misunderstanding. You are a suspect: that is enough; your ticket-of-leave, I warn you, may be withdrawn by ookaz of his Majesty at any moment; and if I find that you have disobeyed my wishes by forcing yourself upon my children, I shall request the Tsar to reconsider his clemency in your case; a word from me will suffice.'

Philipof laughed scornfully. 'Oh! I can quite believe it,' he cried. 'The Tsar's clemency, indeed; why not his justice also, and his gratitude? Oh! a great and a just man is your master, and a grand fabric is the edifice of his virtues—a word from a Dostoief—a Dostoief, a man whose cruelty has driven a wife into her grave, and whose idiotic neglect of his children is fast estranging their hearts from any sort of affection for him—a word from this Dostoief, and down topples the whole card-house of clemency, and justice, and all the rest of the great qualities which go to make this precious Tsar of yours. You are a fool, Dostoief; I am a grown man, not a child, to be turned aside from my intention by threats.'

'Enough, now go,' said Dostoief; 'there is no need to prolong this conversation. That is the door; no, the other one.'

Philipof deliberately chose the door which led to the nursery. 'I have not yet said good-night to my dead cousin's children,' he said.

White and trembling with rage, Dostoief followed him, and watched him visit and caress each child as it lay in bed.

'Come and see us again soon, Uncle Sasha,' they both cried as he left the room, and again Philipof repeated that he would return very soon. Then he stalked away, still followed by their fuming parent, and departed without exchanging another word or look with that irate individual.

When Matrona asked Petka afterwards how it was that he never hugged his father, when bidding him good-night, as he had just hugged Uncle Sasha, Petka replied that it was because he loved Uncle Sasha ever so much better. And this being the very reply which the foolish old nurse had angled for, containing, as it did, a sentiment in which she heartily concurred, and which it gave her pleasure to hear repeated, she went away perfectly happy, and not dreaming that she had been guilty of a great indiscretion.

POSTAGE STAMPS AND THEIR COLLECTION.

THOUSANDS of people, young and old, now find pleasure and profit in stamp collecting, a pursuit which extends year by year, the price of genuine specimens of early stamps rising continually with the demand. There are now about fifty dealers in stamps in London alone, and the collector may be found everywhere. One dealer, Mr W. J. Palmer, of the Strand, estimates the value of his stock at over £60,000; and last year he sold upwards of a hundred thousand stamps, while he examines from five to ten thousand every day. The varied uses to which stamps are put may be judged from the fact that a customer bought 20,000,000 of the commoner sorts, for papering walls of houses and public buildings. It is estimated that there

are 500,000 stamp collectors in the United States, the C. H. Mekeel Stamp and Publishing Co., of St Louis, employing alone about one hundred and thirty persons in the conduct of a very large business. Sensational prices are given for rare stamps. American local varieties bring from £250 to £500; one of Livingston, Alabama, has sold for £140. One of the ten specimens of the Brattleboro stamp has sold for £250; the twenty cent St Louis (1845) for about £500; a pair of Post-office, Mauritius, are worth £600 (two have been sold for £870); and a set of the five British Guiana, first issue of 1850, will fetch £1000. An unused Transvaal stamp with error 'Transoral' has sold for £50. One of the most valuable English stamps is the ninepenny straw-coloured Queen's head with hair-line of 1862, which is worth £30.

Amongst valuable collections is that of Ferrari, of Paris, which is said to be worth £250,000. That of the Duke of York is worth between £30,000 and £40,000; Rothschild, about £100,000; and that of the late Czar of Russia, £150,000. The collection which Mr Tapling left to the British Museum was worth £70,000. There are now collections in Berlin Imperial Museum, also at Amsterdam, Vienna, and Dresden.

Some of the first collectors began before the days of adhesive stamps by cutting out the old newspaper stamp, and placing it in copy-books, with crests, book-prints, and similar curiosities. A Belgian schoolmaster is credited by some with being the founder of Philately. About forty years ago he is said to have tried to make geography more interesting by getting his pupils to adorn their atlases with stamps belonging to the different countries. Others give Mr Palmer, of the Strand, the credit of being the father of Philately in this country. The French collectors soon began to see the necessity of classification, and there is no difference of opinion as to the educational value of a knowledge of the features of the many rulers which usually adorn foreign stamps. Some of these rulers have died; some have been murdered or removed by revolutions. In this way have been preserved interesting portraits of Juarez, and of Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, and of Lincoln and Garfield, Presidents of the United States, as well as of the late Shah of Persia. The Don Carlos stamps of 1873-75 record a futile insurrection; while the change from Alfonso XII. of Spain to the Regency is plainly read on the stamps. As the young Queen of Holland has objected to be represented upon the national postage stamps any longer as a mere child, a new set of Dutch stamps is announced. An Argentine commemorative stamp used for one day only—October 12, 1892—commemorates the discovery of America by Columbus in 1492. Venezuela has a commemorative stamp also for the date when Columbus first stood on the mainland of America, while the United States has a centennial commemorative stamp of her Independence, issued in 1876. Some valuable lessons in history and geography are thus to be gained, and the whereabouts of many an obscure island or state may be fixed in the memory, along with the changes in government, from the study of a good collection of stamps.

As the number of postage stamps which can be collected is increasing every day, the knowledge required to prevent unwary collectors being defrauded increases in an equal degree. The

various South American republics, with a depreciated currency, are continually emitting new issues of postage stamps which are sold in large batches to certain dealers for the purpose of being retailed out to collectors. The debased currency of many states makes the face-value of these stamps considerably more than their cost if bought from the government of the country issuing them. The dealers, however, make no reduction for this depreciation, and stamps which were never intended to be used for the purpose of franking letters through the post are sold at and above their face-value to unsuspecting collectors. In some cases a defacing stamp is obtained and applied to the stamps, so as to make it appear that they have done duty through the post. Some of the treaty ports in China have been exploited in the same way, and stamps apparently duly post-marked are sold in the original sheets in large quantities. There was a bogus issue, also, of six stamps purporting to belong to a state called Sedang, but the whole thing was a fraud, there being no such state in existence. In the case of Bolivar a new set of newspaper stamps was supposed to have been issued in 1892. These were bought up by the dealers and catalogued at 82s. the set. Investigation was made into their genuineness, with the result that it was discovered beyond doubt that no such stamps had ever been issued in Bolivar, and we understand the dealers were compelled to return the money obtained for them to their customers, and that the original dealers who sold them to the retailers had also to disgorge their receipts on account of them. For every stamp used in Cook Islands for postal purposes, it appears that one hundred or two hundred are despatched to the stamp collectors. One Indian native state has issued three hundred and sixty varieties of postage stamps, post-cards, and stamped envelopes between 1877 and 1894. These were certainly never all meant for postal use.

With reference to forged stamps, it may be as well to remind collectors of the clause in the Post-office Protection Act, thanks to Mr Palmer, which enacts a penalty against any one who utters, deals in, or sells fictitious stamps, or knowingly uses for any postal purpose any fictitious stamp, or makes any die or plate for the printing of such a stamp. This section has a wide sweep, and includes both foreign and colonial stamps, and the dies for producing them.

Three years ago the *Times* drew attention to the subject of surcharged stamps in a lengthy article. Lord Ripon had caused a circular to be sent from the Colonial Office in order to put down the abuses connected with the sale of 'surcharged stamps,' which had proved a temptation to postmasters and treasurers, and other public officers, by making irregular profits in dealing with stamp collectors and others. The remedy for this state of matters is to keep a sufficient supply of stamps on hand, and then there would be no necessity to practise 'surcharging.' It appears that when in certain cases it became known that a stamp was getting scarce, agents of the stamp-dealer would at once buy up the stock and ask for more. The Colonial Post-office, in order to get over the delay involved in procuring fresh supplies, would print on dearer stamps than those which were exhausted the price of those which were asked for. For in-

stance, a threepenny stamp becomes a halfpenny one, and a fourpenny stamp a twopenny one. A stamp thus altered in value is said to be 'surcharged,' and a rush is made for this by the dealer. These find their way into collections at 50 or 100 per cent over their value. A Paris dealer is said to have kept a sum of £1000 'placed' at different post-offices, with instructions to local postmasters to send on specimens to that value whenever a new stamp or a fresh surcharge was made. A London dealer one day received a remittance for 12s. 6d. in halfpenny postage stamps from some one in Fiji who was in debt to him for that amount. The stamps, being all surcharged, were sold for about £15.

It will be remembered that the Republic of Liberia, on the west coast of Africa, not having ready cash to pay the expenses of its delegate to Chicago Exhibition, gave him a supply of postage stamps to sell to the best advantage. It appears that this negro republic depends largely on the sale of stamps for paying its way, and the stamps, beautifully engraved in London, are largely sold to stamp collectors. When the North Borneo Company issued a finely engraved stamp in 1894, in six weeks the wholesale dealers turned over £2000 worth of them. One dealer went in for £800 worth, another £400, and two for £1200 between them.

Important public events sometimes leave their record on postage stamps. Our Post-office refused to sell stamps got up in connection with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in furtherance of the objects of the Prince of Wales's Hospital Fund. The bookseller was the medium for the sale of these 1s. and 2s. 6d. stamps, of which the issue was limited. The well-known picture of 'Charity' by Sir Joshua Reynolds forms the basis of the design. The copperplates were destroyed when the impression was completed. There was a rush for the Canadian Jubilee postage stamps. The government at first decided only to present three sets, the recipients being the Duke of York, Duke of Norfolk, and Lady Aberdeen. There were new issues of French stamps in connection with the visit of the Czar to Paris and the opening of the Brussels Exhibition. It may be added that there is now a society for the suppression of speculative stamps.

Mr Firth, in his *Postage Stamps and their Collection* (Upcott Gill), recommends the beginner, if collecting for pleasure, to attend to stamps of countries hitherto much neglected, also 2½d. stamps of all countries in the Postal Union, with post-cards and envelopes. He also recommends a collection of all the halfpenny, penny, sixpenny, and shilling stamps of England and the Colonies. Stanley Gibbons's blank stamp album, and Whitfield, King, & Co.'s interchangeable stamp album, will be found useful. Mr Firth's motto in collecting envelopes is to get the 'envelope, the whole envelope, and nothing but the envelope.' Experience will alone make the collector a critic of used and unused stamps, of design, paper, gum, and perforation, and other features which give character and value to a collection.

A very considerable bibliography has grown up around the subject. There is the catalogue of Calman and Collin, published by the Scott Stamp and Coin Co., New York; Millington and Lockyer's *Postage Stamps of the British Empire*;

The Philatelic Handbook and Stamps and Stamp Collecting, by Major Evans; Philbrick and Westoby's *Postage and Telegraph Stamps of Great Britain* (new edition 1897); while there are and have been many journals, such as *Stamp Collectors' Magazine*, *Philatelist*, and *Philatelic Record*. America has, amongst others, the *Stamp Collectors' Bureau* and the *American Journal of Philately*.

SOME HISTORIC APPARITIONS.

By GEORGE EYRE-TODD.

PROBABLY the more interesting half of the history of every country is the part uncountenanced and little known. The conspicuous event, patent to all the world and to all time, is apt to prove little more than dry crust of fact unless something is known of the personal elements which lay behind it. One asks to be made aware of the human motives and mistakes, the turn of thought, and the seemingly trivial circumstances which have led up to the catastrophe. A knowledge of this desire is the secret of the writing of historic fiction, and it is by filling in between the lines, supplying the probable train of human motive, circumstance, and passion, that the novelist produces his enchanting tale.

This same filling in is sometimes done for us by popular legend and tradition, and where this occurs a wonderful new realism and colour seem added to the narrative. Scotland in particular possesses a singular wealth of such tradition; and, to take one kind of it alone, it is remarkable how often conspicuous events of Scottish history have a lurid and significant light thrown over them by some corollary of uncanny legend which the popular memory has preserved.

Every one is aware of the story, which Shakespeare found in Holinshed, which Holinshed borrowed from Boece, and which Boece took and embellished from the chronicler Wyntoun, of the appearance of the three witches to Macbeth, their prophecy, and its tragic consequences. In Shakespeare's play the witches appear to Macbeth and Banquo as the two are crossing a heath near Forres on their way home from victory against rebellious islesmen in the west. And so strongly has the dramatic incident taken hold of popular imagination that the hillock on which the witches stood when Macbeth accosted them is actually pointed out at a spot in the Brodie woods between Nairn and Forres, and the barrenness of its sides accounted for by the statement that the witches poured out their horrid brewing on the summit. The original account of the matter, however, as given by Wyntoun, is very different. In the old chronicler's narrative the incident is related in the form of a dream.

One night, it appears, Macbeth thought in his dreaming that he was sitting beside the king. It was at a pause in hunting, and in his hand he held two greyhounds in a leash. As he sat he thought he saw three women going by, and these women he took to be three 'weird sisters.' The first he heard say as she was passing: 'Lo! yonder the thane of Cromarty!' The second woman in her turn said: 'Of Moray yonder I see the thane!' Then the third said shortly: 'I see the king!' 'All this,' adds Wyntoun, 'Macbeth heard in his dreaming. Soon afterwards, while still in his

youth, he was made thane of these thanedoms; then next he thought to be king when Duncan's days should be over. But in the end the fantasy of his dream moved him to slay his uncle.

It is possible, of course, that Wyntoun, in giving this tale, modified some tradition of an actual, tangible appearance of the three weird sisters; but it is not likely that he did so, for in another part of his work he gravely recounts an altercation which St Serf, the patron saint of his monastery, had with the devil *in propria persona*. The story, therefore, in its successive versions, forms a very good example of the manner in which such traditions grow. But the legend in any shape, whether as dream or as actual appearance, remains the factor of dramatic interest in the otherwise empty story of the murder of King Duncan.

More mysterious, if less dramatic in its consequences, is a story recounted by Wyntoun's contemporary, Fordoun, in the *Scotichronicon*, and also embodied by Boece. It belongs to the last days of Alexander III., that 'Pessybill King,' who kept his peace with such an iron hand, and gave the Norsemen on the sea-slopes at Largs to know how he could keep his kingdom.

This last of the long line of Celtic kings was a widower, in old age, and the succession to his throne hung upon the life of his daughter's daughter, the infant Princess of Norway. Scotland was still a land of separate races—Scotic and Cymric, Saxon and Norman—and the nobles foresaw that, without a king to rule, the nation might easily fall to pieces, and be lost to name and fame. In the circumstances it was well that Alexander should marry again. A bride was found in Joleta or Iolande, daughter of the Count of Dreux; and the marriage took place amid great rejoicings in the church of Jedburgh. In the evening—it was the 14th of October in the year 1285—to crown the occasion, a great masked ball was given in the abbey. Never, say the chroniclers, had so magnificent a spectacle been seen before in Scotland. Thane and abbot, bishop and prince and earl—all the notables of the realm were there; all had sought to do honour to the hour; and the old king himself and his new-made bride were present to grace the occasion. Music and the dance were at their height, and the courtly pageant was at its brightest, when suddenly, to the awe and horror of the beholders, the apparition of a ghastly figure became visible on the floor of the abbey. It glided silently amid the revellers, seemed to join for some moments in the dance, and then vanished as silently and swiftly as it had appeared. None there knew what or who it was; but by all who saw it it was taken as an omen of disaster. And, sure enough, not a year afterwards, by an accident to his horse, the brave Scots king lay dead under the cliff at Kinghorn, and the shadow of the longest and most dreadful of its wars was gathering on the horizon of Scotland.

Again, not many years after the appearance just narrated, tradition records a strange adventure which is said to have befallen the patriot Wallace. The story is told by Henry the Minstrel in rude but spirited verse.

In the course of an amorous adventure in Perth the knight of Elderslie had been all but trapped.

Indeed, but for the timely remorse of his lady-love, who had been bought over by the English governor, he must inevitably have been taken. As it was, escaping in woman's clothes, he was closely pursued by his enemies, aided by a bloodhound. Accompanied by a small party of followers, he made for the Forest of Gask, in Strathearn. After some time, the pursuit continuing hot behind them and their case appearing almost desperate, one of the party, a man named Fawdoun, suddenly declared he could go no farther. Wallace appears to have had previous suspicions of his follower's good faith, and these suspicions were now strengthened by Fawdoun's conduct. The leader, at any rate, knew that if this man fell into the English hands the fate of the party was assured. To prevent treachery, therefore, as there was no time to lose, Wallace drew his sword and struck off Fawdoun's head. This act saved the lives of the party for the time, for on the hound reaching the spot it stopped at the blood; but the occurrence had a curious sequel.

The little band, now reduced to thirteen, took up their quarters in Gask Hall. There they made a fire, and began in haste to make ready a couple of sheep which they had taken from a fold close by. They were about to begin a rude supper, when they were startled by a sudden blast of horns outside. Fearing it might be the English who had discovered his retreat, Wallace sent out two men to bring word. After a time, no tidings being returned and the horns still making a tremendous blast, he sent out other two. These, however, also remained away; and presently, in anger, the leader sent forth his whole remaining party. Wallace was now left alone, wondering and impatient. Still the blast of horns increased; so, concluding that the place was surrounded by enemies, and that his men had fallen into their hands, the knight himself drew his sword and went to the door. There, standing opposite to him in the darkness, he beheld Fawdoun, with—dreadful to relate!—his head in his hand. At the sight Wallace crossed himself; but the spectre hardly gave him time to do so, for, with surprising promptitude for a dead man, it hurled the head at him. The hero, nevertheless, proved equal to the occasion, for he picked up the head by the hair and as vigorously hurled it back again. By this time, though, he had had enough of the interview, deeming his antagonist no spirit of man, but some devil; and considering, as the narrator quaintly puts it, that there was little advantage to be got by remaining longer there, he turned and fled. The last thing he saw, as he made his way up Strathearn, was Gask Hall in a blaze, with the spectre of Fawdoun towering gigantic in the lurid light, as it brandished a blazing rafter over its head.

That night Wallace swam the Forth at Cambuskenneth, and from his refuge in the Torwood sent a woman back to the scene of his discomfiture. Strange to say, she found Gask Hall unharmed; and there a fragment of the ruin stands to the present day to witness to the tale, though it has been succeeded since then by an 'auld house' and a new house of Gask in turn, both famous in sweet Scots song.

A traditional portent, not less interesting, has supplied the motive for John Galt's romance, *The*

Spaewife, and is related with telling effect in D. G. Rossetti's poem 'The King's Tragedy.'

James I., it is said, was on his last fatal journey, to spend Christmas in the Blackfriars' Monastery at Perth. He had reached the shore of the Scottish Sea, as the Firth of Forth was then called, and was about to embark for the opposite shore, when a woman threw herself on his path, and with wild gestures and boding words urged him to turn back. Time after time in her wanderings, she declared, she had seen his wraith, and each time a winding-sheet was wrapped higher about his figure; and now, she exclaimed, if he crossed that sea, he should never again come back. James, as we know, put aside the warning, crossed the Firth, and took up his abode in Perth, with the tragic consequence which is matter of history. It is said, however, that on the wild night of February on which he was slain, just before the assassins broke in, the soothsayer once again appeared with her warning before the Charterhouse gates, and had James listened to her he might even then have escaped his fate. One of the last things he heard, before the flare of torches and clash of armour told him the truth, was the wail of the woman's foreboding under the very windows of his chamber, when she had been turned from the door. Tradition has it that the soothsayer was possessed of second-sight; but as she was Highland, it may well be that she had less occult means of knowing the plots for the king's death which Sir Robert Graham was just then hatching in 'the country of the wild Scots.'

Two of James I.'s descendants, if tradition is to be believed, were favoured likewise with supernatural warnings, and in the case of James IV. the warning occurred twice. Both occurrences are recorded by Pitcottie, who received the account of them from an eye-witness, the famous Sir David Lyndsay.

It was on the eve of setting out for Flodden, and James was worshipping in the great old kirk of St Michael, which still stands close by Linlithgow Palace. Evensong, it appears, was nearly done, when there came suddenly in at the kirk door a tall man in a blue gown, belted with a linen roll and wearing sandals on his feet. His head was bare, in his hand he carried a great pikestaff, and he came forward rudely 'cryand and speirand for the king.' Without ceremony he went up to James, and leaning his arm on the royal praying-desk, began a brusque harangue. 'My mother,' he said, 'hath sent me, desiring thee not to pass whither thou art purposed; for if thou dost, thou wilt not fare well in thy journey, nor none that passeth with thee. Further, she bade thee melle with no woman, for if thou do it thou wilt be confounded, and brought to shame.' The king, it is recorded, was about to make answer, but before his eyes, and in the presence of all his lords, the man vanished 'as he had been ane blink of the sunne, or a whiss of the whirlwind,' and could no more be seen.

The second occasion happened a few days later. James was at Edinburgh, busy marshalling his army on the Borroughmuir, and getting his cannon out of the Castle for the campaign, when at midnight a cry was heard at the Market-cross, proclaiming what the invisible herald gave out to be the 'summons of Plotecock,' otherwise Pluto. This summons called upon all men 'to compare,

both earl, and lord, and baron, and all honest gentlemen within the town, every man specified by his own name, within the space of forty days, before the said Plotecock, where it should happen him to appoint.' All the persons thus cited, it appears, were among the slain afterwards at Flodden, except one. That fortunate personage, happening to be on his outer stair, heard the summons, and, with great presence of mind and legal knowledge, took a crown from his purse and threw it into the street, crying, 'I appeal from that summons, judgment, and sentence thereof, and take me all whole in the mercy of God and Christ Jesus, His Son.'

Unfortunately, there is reason to believe that both of these apparitions were stage-effects got up by the astute Sir David Lyndsay himself, at the instance of Queen Margaret, to dissuade the somewhat morbid mind of James from the English war. The mention of a possible relation to a woman points to a natural feminine jealousy of the king's weaknesses towards the Queen of France and the Lady of Ford.

For the apparition which in his later days visited the sleepless eyes of James V. the sole authority is the highly characteristic *Historie* of John Knox. Sir James Hamilton of Finnart, the former friend of the king, had been tried and executed at Edinburgh upon a charge of twice attempting the life of James—once seeking to murder him in bed at Holyrood, and again shooting at him from the steeple at Linlithgow. These charges, however, did not satisfy the mind of Knox, who seeks to make out that the true reason for Hamilton's condemnation was his leaning towards the cause of the Reformers. In proof of his assertion Knox states that the king was tormented afterwards by the apparition of his unjust judge.

'How terrible a vision,' he states, 'the said Prince saw, lying in Linlithgow that night that Thomas Scot Justice-clerk, died in Edinburgh, men of good credit can yet report. For, afraid at midnight or after, he called aloud for torches, and raised all that lay beside him in the palace, and told that Thomas Scot was dead;' for he had been at him with a company of devils, and had said unto him these words: 'Oh, woe to the day that ever I knew thy service; for serving of thee against God, against His servants, and against Justice, I am adjudged to endless torment!'

It is needless to expatiate on these traditions. The chief interest which they possess lies in the light which they reflect upon the human nature of past times; and, for the amount of that light which they afford, they remain of more value than many dissertations.

A MINIATURE REPUBLIC.

MORE than two hundred years ago, Addison, in his delightful 'Remarks on Several Parts of Italy,' says: 'At twelve miles' distance from Rimini stands the little Republick of St Marino, which I could not forbear visiting, though it lyes out of the common tour of travellers, and has excessively bad ways to it, because I know of no body else that has done it.' Like Addison, we, too, could not forbear

visiting the place, though for doing so we had not the same reason.

To one looking landward from the coast near Rimini, a long spur of the Apennines bounds the landscape, and the eye is especially attracted to the three peaks of Monte Titano, on which the little capital of San Marino is built. Day after day we had watched those peaks, sometimes glowing in the morning light, sometimes thrown into dark relief at sunset, now veiled in mist or capped with thunder-clouds, and we formed an inward determination that the Titan Mount should not always be to us an unknown land. In the diligence, or rather wagonette, covered with a linen awning and drawn by a pair of good horses, we set forth on a bright July afternoon.

After leaving Rimini, passing by the ancient fortress of the Malatesta family, once lords of Rimini, the road for four or five miles was level and somewhat monotonous, passing between gardens and orchards, white clematis and the scarlet flowers of the pomegranate making gay the hedges. The way then gradually becoming steeper, glimpses of mountain or sea presented themselves across corn-fields or trim mulberry plantations, becoming more and more lovely as we proceeded.

'Now you are in the land of freedom,' said a fellow-traveller as we crossed the bridge over the narrow stream which at this point forms the boundary between the kingdom of Italy and the Republic. At the village of Serravalle, in the commune of the same name, ended our first stage. From this point the ascent became more rapid, and the distant scene grew wilder, as one Apennine ridge after another came into view, and soon the Titan Mount rose before us in all its majesty sheer from the elevated plateau we had now reached.

Outside the chief of the two gates of the city we next drew up, for no vehicle, except perhaps a bullock-cart, ever goes up the steep, narrow, tortuous streets. This is the Porta San Francesco, so called from the neighbouring Franciscan church and convent. It is of somewhat imposing proportions, and bears above the massive archway the word 'Libertas,' the motto of the Republic. The second gate, that of La Ripa, is more picturesque, built as it is of huge stones, now overgrown with trailing ivy and brambles, and approached from below by a narrow stony way scarcely more than a bridle-path.

The tall stone houses of the Città looked gloomy as we entered the dark winding streets, especially as we had yet to begin a search for an abiding-place. Our search ended in a house the back windows of which commanded a glorious prospect of rugged mountains stretching ridge behind ridge like the waves of a stormy ocean suddenly petrified; and in the foreground, wild rocks hurled in confusion, and stony valleys, among which the Marignano wound its devious course towards the sea. Here were wild fastnesses and narrow gorges, which might indeed have afforded secure refuge to San Marino when, having embraced the Christian faith, he was compelled to flee from the Diocletian persecutions. Tradition says that, wandering homeless and desolate near the castle of Felicità, a

rich lady of the district, he was mistaken for a robber by her two young sons, one of whom, taking aim at the saint, was suddenly struck with blindness. His brother, then raising his bow with similar intent, likewise instantly became blind. Their mother, concluding from this catastrophe that the intruder must be something more than an ordinary mortal, implored him to have pity on her children and restore their sight. Her request was granted; and she, in gratitude, bestowed on the wanderer the rugged Titan Mount, where he founded the city which bears his name. So much for the legend.

Alban Butler, in *The Lives of the Saints*, says: 'Marino was by trade a mason, who worked for some time at the building of the walls of Rimini. But God having made known his holiness, he was ordained deacon by Gaudentius, Bishop of Brescia. He retired to a hut he had constructed in the middle of a wood at Monte Titano, where he lived for some years as a hermit, and died towards the end of the fourth century.' His reputation for piety and wisdom attracted many followers, for whom he made laws and founded a city; 'so that'—again to quote Addison—'the Commonwealth of Marino may boast at least of a nobler original than that of Rome, the one having been at first an asylum for robbers and murderers, and the other a resort of persons eminent for their piety and devotion.'

In the course of time a castle was built for the protection of the infant community; and it is the proud boast of the Sammarinesi of to-day that their stronghold has never been in the hands of an enemy. In the stormy times succeeding the fall of the Roman Empire the Republic seems to have been too inaccessible, or too poor and insignificant to attract attention, and while rival powers were contending for the mastery in the rich plains below, it quietly maintained its position, gaining occasionally small accessions of territory.

We first hear of its coming into collision with the Holy See in the thirteenth century, when a Bishop of Arezzo, vicar of the Pope, sent his agent thither to collect taxes. The Sammarinesi objecting to the demand, and refusing to receive the emissary, the case was laid before a tribunal in Rimini, when judgment was given in their favour. The vicar accepting the decision, the independence of San Marino was thus virtually recognised by the Papacy. But an enemy nearer home threatened the freedom of the little Republic. The growing power and greed of the Malatesta family, the lords of Rimini, imperilled its very existence. Sigismund, one of the most ambitious of the race, ravaged its territory, in the hope of drawing its people into a contest which he knew would probably be fatal to them. They appealed to Pope Pius II., who espoused their cause because of Sigismund's sacrilegious attacks on the Church. With this powerful support, the struggle ended favourably for the Republic, its territory being increased and its independence guaranteed by a Papal bull.

When Cæsar Borgia carried fire and sword through the length and breadth of the Romagna, San Marino would probably have shared the

common fate but for the opportune downfall of the invader, who was seized and imprisoned by the then Pope Julius II.

But Papal favour was not always to be relied on, for in 1543 Pope Paul III., wishing to make a present to one of his nephews, thought that San Marino would exactly suit his purpose, and sent troops to take it by surprise. With this intention they marched from Rimini on the evening of June 3, hoping to reach their destination under cover of darkness. But as they were crossing the plain a terrible snow-storm came on, completely hiding the mountain from view and throwing the ranks into confusion; so that when day broke they found themselves no farther than the frontiers of the Republic, and, unwilling to be discovered, they beat a precipitate retreat. In consequence of this deliverance, the 4th of June has ever since been a day of solemn thanksgiving at San Marino.

Another day of national rejoicing is February 5, the anniversary of the failure of a second attempt to bring San Marino under the rule of the Papacy. Cardinal Alberoni had been sent as legate to the Romagna by Pope Clement XII., and, by bribery and corruption, had won over some faithless Sammarinesi to betray their country. Having installed himself in the city, he summoned all the officers of State to meet him in the cathedral for the purpose of swearing allegiance to the Pontifical authority. When all were assembled on the appointed day, a stentorian voice resounded through the echoing aisles, making the following declaration: 'I have sworn fidelity to the Republic of San Marino. I confirm this oath.' It was the voice of a patriotic old Sammarinese, Alfonso Giangi, and his words were taken up and repeated by the throng of his fellow-citizens, who shouted enthusiastically: 'Viva Giangi! Viva San Marino! Viva la Repubblica!'

The cardinal, fearing for his life, made good his escape; and Belluzzi, a man of high reputation, was sent to Rome, as a delegate of the Republic, to obtain from the Pope a pledge that there should be no further encroachments on its liberty. The Pope disavowed the proceedings of the cardinal, assuring the envoy that, so far from desiring to seize the Republic, his only wish had been to extend to it his fatherly protection. A treaty of peace was accordingly signed, February 5, 1740.

When Napoleon, fresh from the victories of Lodi and Arcola, was stationed at Pesaro, some miles south of Rimini, he sent a deputation to San Marino. Ostensibly upholding everywhere the cause of freedom in the capacity of general of the French Republic, he could not but show favour to her diminutive sister, and accordingly, with assurances of friendship, he made a tempting offer of an increase of territory should the opportunity present itself, asking the citizens, in other words, whether there was any vineyard of Naboth on which they had set their hearts. But the little state, while gratefully accepting the offered friendship, refused the gain, preferring to preserve its independence with poverty, and merely requested that its commerce might not be interfered with. Napoleon, astonished at this disinterested conduct, wrote a letter granting

their desire, and offering, in the name of the French Republic, a present of four field-pieces and one thousand quintals of corn. The corn was duly received; but the cannon never arrived. Afterwards, when Napoleon was emperor and the map of Italy was under revision, Mascalcchi, the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, appealed to him as to what was to be done with San Marino. 'Ma foi!' replied the Emperor, laughing, 'we must preserve it as a specimen of a Republic.'

In later years, during the great struggle for Italian unity, Garibaldi with a few of his followers took refuge on the Titan Mount. The Austrians, who then occupied Rimini, threatened to attack the place unless Garibaldi were at once given up. To this the Sammarinesi could not consent; but, unable to cope with the force of Austria, they stipulated that Garibaldi should receive a passport for America, and that his companions, on giving up their arms, should be free to return to their homes. This was accorded; but Garibaldi, mistrusting Austrian good faith, escaped by night to the little port of Casenatico, where he embarked in a fishing-boat. Those of his followers who, trusting to the treaty, went to Rimini were seized and imprisoned. A marble bust of the hero occupies a conspicuous position in the main street.

Since these stormy times and the settlement of the kingdom of Italy, San Marino has always been on very friendly terms with the Italian government, and has shared in the general progress of the country.

And so, for fourteen hundred years, this miniature Republic has held her own, preserving her independence, her laws, and institutions intact, the gray walls and towers of her little metropolis still presenting a firm front to the mountain storms, and scarcely distinguishable from the rock on which they stand. Strictly speaking, the government of San Marino is an oligarchy rather than a Republic. It is vested in two Presidents, or *Reggenti*, as they are called, who hold office for six months, and a Chamber of sixty members elected for life. All legislative powers rest with this Chamber, which also fills up all vacancies occurring in its own body. There is, besides, a small Council of twelve members, two-thirds of whom retire every year. The election of the *Reggenti* takes place on 1st April and 1st October; the Chamber selecting six candidates, and every elector—that is, every citizen above the age of twenty-five—receiving three voting-papers, each containing the names of two candidates. These papers are dropped into an urn behind the high-altar in the cathedral to the solemn chanting of the *Te Deum*; and one of them having been extracted by a child, the names thereon written are proclaimed by the priest to the people as those of their duly elected *Reggenti*. The religious ceremony over, the new *Reggenti* go in state to the Council Hall, where they take the oaths and receive the seals of the State and the keys of the city. Any man refusing this office when duly elected forfeits all civil rights.

With certain exceptions, every man serves in the army, which consists in all of about twelve

hundred men; and there is, besides, a body of gendarmes, who, as well as the magistrates, are all drawn from beyond the limits of the Republic, so that they may have no personal relations to hinder the impartial fulfilment of their duties.

All Italian money is current in San Marino, which, however, has a copper coinage of its own, bearing the heraldic device of the Republic—namely, 'Tre monti, tre torre, tre penne' (Three peaks, three towers, and three pennons). It also has its own postage stamps, some of which bear the same device as the coinage; others, the head of a beautiful woman, copied from a statue of the Republic which stands in the chief square of the city. There is no national debt; the taxation is very light; and the revenue is always found sufficient for the expenses. The exports are cattle, tobacco, oil, cheese, and other agricultural products, and silk culture is carried on to some extent in the level districts. The wine of San Marino has also long been noted.

Of the three towers, each surmounted by a pennon of iron, which crown the three peaks of Monte Titano, that of La Rocca forms part of a fortress built in 1411, and now used as a prison; but, happily, crime is rare, and consequently prisoners few. The top of the tower commands a magnificent view.

A steep stony pathway cut in the mountain-side leads down from the fortress to the plateau where stands the cathedral, occupying the site of an older church, and built on the model of the Madeleine in Paris. Over its handsome portico is the legend, 'Divo Marino Patrono et Libertatis Auctori Sen. P.Q.;' and a white marble statue of the saint, the work of Taddolini of Bologna, a pupil of Canova, stands in the choir. He is represented in deacon's robes, holding in his hand a scroll which bears the arms and motto of the Republic. On a still lower level is the principal square of the town, another rock-terrace, one side open to the magnificent mountain country; while the other three are occupied by the chief public buildings, one of which—the new Council Hall—is a handsome building, with a lofty tower somewhat resembling that of the Palazzo Vecchio at Florence. In the middle of the square is a public well, supplied from an immense subterranean reservoir, and surmounted by a beautiful statue of the Republic, bearing the motto 'Libertas.' It was the gift of a German lady who had made San Marino her home, and who was ennobled by the State, receiving the title of Duke of Aquaviva.

The Republic provides carefully for education; there are elementary schools, and even a university, whose degrees are recognised throughout Italy. There is a public library, and an Art Gallery and Museum are in process of formation. Medical advice can be had by all the citizens free of expense, as the government pays the physicians. It is a curious fact that till quite lately the Sammarinesi have had no cemetery, and their manner of disposing of the dead was, to say the least, extraordinary. Except the few who were buried in the vaults of the churches, all were laid in stone receptacles in the walls between the exterior columns

of the cathedral. After a term of years these were opened to make room for other inmates, the bones taken out, burnt on the hillside, and the ashes scattered to the winds of heaven.

WHITE ANTS OR TERMITES.

By J. T. CUNNINGHAM.

IN the minds of most people the name of these insects is associated with ideas of tropical countries, where they have been described as constructing huge mounds of clay, destroying the woodwork of houses and furniture, and living in communities like bees, but with 'queens' of extraordinary size. But it is not so generally known that white ants or termites occur in Europe. There are two species in the island of Sicily, and one of these extends through Italy and the south of France as far north as Bordeaux. From time to time the natural history of these insects, both in Europe and in the tropics, has been investigated and studied by eminent naturalists. But the discoveries recently made after many years of observation and experiment by Sicilian zoologists surpass in interest and importance all those that have preceded them. The researches to which we refer were carried on principally by Professor Grassi, of the University of Catania, who was assisted by one of his pupils, Dr Sandias.

The termites of Sicily are of two species, *Termes lucifugus* and *Calotermes flavicollis*, the histories of which differ considerably. It is the former of these two which occurs in the south of France. The insects live in decayed wood, which forms their only food. They are not capable of gnawing undecayed wood, although their presence causes decay to spread more rapidly, because the galleries which they excavate introduce air and moisture into the interior of the wood. The *Termes lucifugus* is in the habit of lining its galleries with wood pulp, formed partly of the undigested remains of food expelled from the intestine, partly of the disgorged food from the stomach. With the same material the insects of this species make galleries outside the wood in which they live, either in semi-tubular form resting on a solid surface or completely tubular. Without such tubes or arcades the insects very seldom emerge into the open air, and when any do emerge they remain for a very short time. By means of such galleries they reach trees or timber not connected with their original nest.

It is from the same material that in South America some species build large globular nests, extending out from the branch or trunk of a tree which they inhabit; and it seems very probable that the great hillocks nine or ten feet high which are constructed by termites in Africa are formed chiefly, if not entirely, of the same material, for all the species feed only on rotten wood and seem to be ill adapted for building with mud or clay.

Calotermes flavicollis forms much smaller communities than the other species, and a few specimens can make themselves at home in very confined quarters. The indispensable conditions

for their existence are a certain degree of warmth and moisture ; and many of Grassi's most successful experiments were made on communities which he kept for weeks in small glass tubes closed with a cork and carried about in his waistcoat pocket. A few pieces of decayed wood were enough to supply all their requirements. But they had an unpleasant habit of boring through the cork and so escaping ; and although their presence in the clothes or on the person was not to be dreaded like that of some other insects, their escape brought interesting experiments to an untimely conclusion.

Every year, chiefly in the month of May, the swarming of winged perfect insects takes place from the habitations of both species. They are about one-third of an inch long, with thin delicate wings longer than the body. It is well known that the termites belong to the same division of insects as dragon-flies, and their wings are similar to those of the latter. The winged termites take flight in the morning, and are destroyed in large numbers by birds, lizards, and ants. In the case of *Termes lucifugus*, none ever survive to form new colonies ; while in the case of the other species a small proportion survive, join one another in pairs, and each pair, throwing off its wings and creeping into some hollow or cavity in a part of a tree or vine where decay has commenced, lays eggs and founds a new community, or, to use a more correct term, a new family.

The swarming of *Termes lucifugus* being a useless process, not leading to the formation of new families, there must be in this species some other means by which new families are produced, and by which extermination is prevented. When the constitution of the communities in the two species has been ascertained the mystery is explained. In a family of *Calotermes* there are only two individuals capable of producing offspring—the so-called king and queen, or male and female. These are without wings, but they differ from all the other members of the family in their dark colour and the possession of well-developed eyes. The wing-stumps are present, which were left when the wings were thrown off after swarming. The female is larger than the male, but does not reach the enormous size of the queens of tropical species. Now, no such king and queen were ever found in the habitations of *Termes lucifugus*. The fertile individuals in colonies of this species were similar to the immature kings and queens of the other species. They had not the dark colour, the well-developed eyes, nor the wing-stumps of the perfect insects, and they were much smaller. There were hundreds of such individuals of the female sex, and sometimes a number of males ; but the latter were only present for a short period, being absent during the rest of the year. In fact, these fertile males and females were proved to be immature individuals whose reproductive powers had been perfected, and whose further development had been arrested. They possess the beginnings of wings, but these are very different from the stumps which remain when the wings are cast off in the perfect insects after swarming. These 'complementary kings and queens,' as Grassi calls them, never leave the nest or habitation, but remain in the family in which they have been reared, and continue to lay their eggs in the same tree.

The individuals of *Termes lucifugus* are very numerous ; they pass easily from tree to tree, and carry eggs and larvæ with them. But the complementary fertile individuals never change their home. Consequently many trees contain swarms of termites but no fertile forms. After a time, however, the insects in a tree newly colonised cease to depend on the parent tree or family, and rear hundreds of fertile, but not fully developed, males and females for themselves. Thus a new community is established, and so the species is perpetuated without any danger of extermination.

It has further been proved that if the king and queen of a family of the other species, *Calotermes flavicollis*, are taken away at any time, a single fertile couple are produced from individuals which have not finished their development. These are substitution kings and queens, and resemble the complementary kings and queens of the other species.

The strangest part of the whole story is, that the termites are able to produce the precociously fertile forms in whatever numbers and at whatever time they please. That is to say, they produce them only when they are required. *Calotermes* only produces them when the true king and queen are killed or removed. If a new king and queen are introduced while the others are alive they are killed. The chief, if not the only, means employed to cause the precocious development of the reproductive powers is feeding the immature individuals with the secretion of the salivary glands of the workers. The workers are themselves individuals whose development has been arrested, and they feed the newly-hatched larvæ with saliva, but they do not feed the older larvæ with this food exclusively, except when it is intended to make them precociously fertile. All fully-developed individuals leave the nest and 'swarm ;' it is only those that are made fertile before the wings are developed which lay eggs in the same nest in which they have been reared.

LOVE THAT AVAILETH.

EASY it were to give my life to thee,
Its days of toil and hope, its utmost wealth ;
To travel the wide earth, the pathless sea,
Tending thy want, thy sickness, and thy health.

Such were a summer task, a soul's desire,
Though I were bared of all things for thy sake.
There is a sacrifice whose worth is higher
Than any gift supremest love can make.

To stand aside while others wait and tend thee—
To know thee ministered by other care,
To watch while other loving hands defend thee—
To see the service which I cannot share—

To joy when alien kindness is availing—
To quench the jealous agony, the pain !—
O true heart's love, so patient yet so failing,
Such a high glory how canst thou attain ?

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

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ON THE BANKS OF THE SEINE.

A HOLIDAY FORTNIGHT.

By Mrs M. CORBET-SEYMOUR.

I WILL suppose somebody to be contemplating a holiday, the primary condition that it shall not be too costly. The said somebody wishes a change of scene from his native land, and cannot make up his mind where to go—'abroad' being rather a vague term, full of potentialities, agreeable or otherwise. To such an one I am going to suggest a visit to the banks of the Seine, any month between May and September being suitable in the matter of temperature.

The starting-place shall be Newhaven, the landing effected at Dieppe. This is now a fashionable bathing-resort for Parisians and others, far too expensive during the summer season to be recommended to those who, from inclination or necessity, study economic pleasure-taking. A couple of hours will be sufficient for seeing the principal buildings; but if a night's rest is wished for, the Hôtel du Soleil d'Or will not be exorbitant in its charges.

So on to Rouen, the chief town in the department of the Lower Seine, and once the capital of Normandy. Here the tourist must spend two or three days, and the Hôtel de l'Europe can be recommended as reasonable and comfortable. From the upper part of the town there is a fine view over the River Seine—the river which divides it into two parts, connected by two bridges. The principal buildings are on the one bank; the prison, barracks, and cattle-market are on the other. The cathedral church of Notre Dame is a splendid specimen of Gothic architecture; it contains many fine monuments and some magnificent stained-glass windows. The churches of St Ouen and St Maclou are very beautiful; there are others too numerous to mention in a brief paper or to see in a brief visit. The Place de la Pucelle is pointed out as the spot where Joan of Arc was burned at the stake in 1431.

From Rouen the steamer runs every day

during summer to Havre—a charming trip down the Seine, which will cost six francs first-class, five francs second-class. Havre is a busy and modern town, but there are no interesting monuments to be seen. Its harbour is worth visiting by those who are interested in shipping; the boulevards and the church of Notre Dame should not be overlooked. But after a night's rest at the Hôtel de Normandie or the Hôtel de Bordeaux, the traveller will be quite ready to take the steamer across the river to the little town of Honfleur, which I propose as his headquarters.

Yes! though people and guidebooks remark that its streets are crooked and narrow, and that—exception being made of the old church of St Catharine, which is built of wood, and the church of St Léonard, which boasts some fine modern glass—there is nothing much to see, I still suggest Honfleur as a pleasant, healthy, and inexpensive place wherein to spend a holiday fortnight.

The Hôtel du Cheval Blanc, by the little pier, will accommodate you for six or seven francs per diem, everything included except wine—even the excellent cider, which is of course a speciality of Normandy. The walks in all directions are charming; to the forest of Touques for instance, with infinite possibilities in the matter of wild flowers, or along the road to St Sauveur on one side, or to picturesque Penne-der-Pis on the other. Then there is the ascent of the Côte de Grâce, which rises high above the little town; and its tiny votive chapel to visit, adorned with quaint pictures and offerings of all descriptions. Here for centuries sailors have come on pilgrimage before going to sea; here mothers and wives have knelt to pray for the safe home-coming of the breadwinner, upon whose life so much depends. The Saturday's market is the chief event of the week to the Honfleurais, and an amusing scene to the passing visitor. Grouped round the church of St Catharine are the stalls from which you purchase butter, vegetables, poultry, all excellent and all cheap.

In the vicinity of the Cours d'Orleans are the stalls for the display of stuffs and ready-made

clothing, which last the vendor will often put on in order to give a hesitating customer the opportunity of admiring shape and style. Now and again a travelling dentist appears on market-days at Honfleur. A chair for the accommodation of the victim is arranged in the cart, and when a sufferer can be tempted to undergo an operation his groans or cries are drowned by the noise of two drums, which have previously heralded the approach of the vehicle. From Honfleur to Trouville would be a charming ride for the cyclist, or a carriage drive for those who do not favour the fashionable wheel.

Caen is another favourite excursion, and is almost the most interesting town in Normandy. Here, in the church of St Stephen, lies the body of William the Conqueror. It was here too that Charlotte Corday met the Girondist leaders and planned that assassination of Marat which she believed would liberate France. The churches are numerous, and are without exception fine buildings from an architectural point of view. Like nearly every Norman town, Caen boasts many interesting old houses; but of late years it has become more important commercially. Lace-making employs the women and children.

Another day's excursion from Honfleur is to Bayeux, a dreary old town, yet worthy of a visit if only for the sake of seeing the famous tapestries which were the work of Queen Matilda and the ladies of her court. This tapestry consists of fifty-eight representations of historical subjects. In the first Edward the Confessor is shown, commanding Harold to go to Normandy and tell Duke William that he will one day be king of England. The second represents Harold on his journey; the third, Harold engaged in prayer; the fourth, Harold on the sea, &c. In these needlework-pictures the Normans wear chain-armour, and carry large shields shaped like children's kites. The last of the series shows the English flying before the conquering army at the battle of Hastings. The noble cathedral of Bayeux dates from 1106, with additions.

Another day of the sojourn at Honfleur may be pleasantly spent at Lisieux, a short journey by rail or a ride for the cyclist. It has been greatly modernised, and is now a thriving town with a considerable woollen trade. But there are still many ancient buildings and old wooden houses that date from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The cathedral, commenced in 1045 and several times destroyed, has been restored in the style of the period.

There are usually a few English families living in Honfleur, but not enough to be called a colony. There is a resident English chaplain and a very friendly English consul. The shops are sufficiently numerous, and sufficiently good, to supply all the ordinary wants of the tourist. The pastry cooks (and there are several) will be sure to attract him; nor must he leave the town without tasting the little cream cheeses known as *fromages de Pont l'Évêque*.

Given fine weather (and in summer it is very fine in Normandy), a holiday on the banks of the Seine will be so pleasant that the visitor

will look back from the deck of the departing steamer with regret that he cannot stay longer at Honfleur, and an '*Au revoir*' rather than 'good-bye' to fair France.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XIX.

THOUGH Philipof had so successfully kept his temper within bounds while in the presence of Dostoief and the children, he was nevertheless extremely angry and depressed when he stepped out into the street. This was another attack upon him by his evil destiny, one more stab from the dagger of misfortune, one more drop in his already brimming cup of injustice. Insults from Dostoief were nothing; they could and must be borne for Olga's sake, though Philipof bitterly wished that she had not imposed so hard a task upon him; but if he was to be deprived of his principal solace in these dark days—the society of Olga's children—then, positively, life would not be worth living; he might as well be back in the fortress for any pleasure he extracted out of life outside the walls of his prison. Of course Matrona and Katia could both be trusted to ignore their master's orders to refuse him admittance, but Dostoief could not long remain in ignorance of his visits. He would set spies and detectives to watch the house, and the servants would get into trouble. Others would be put into their places—to the grief of the children—and there would be no possibility of seeing his little nephew and niece unless he forced his way into the house. It was a bad business, and Philipof went down the road in that condition of mind in which a man longs for some one to address an offensive remark to him in order that he may relieve his feelings by knocking him down.

For an hour and more he tramped the streets, reviewing his position, reviling destiny, counting up one by one his grievances against the powers that be, fuming, despairing; now deciding that a plunge into the Neva would be the only wise course—there was the Nicholas Bridge ready to hand, and the dark current, full of back-waters and dangerous eddies, beneath—why not end the tyranny of fate once and for all? A single leap would do it. Then again, chasing the unworthy thought, would come another—that he would live on, and wrest even yet from fortune some share of her gifts. Other men had justice and happiness accorded to them in this life. Why should not he? Was he less deserving than others? Was he never to have his turn?

If Philipof had only known it, this evening was the dark hour for him which comes before the dawn. He was even now walking unconsciously into a change of fortune. Here was one street, and in the next destiny had a surprise for him. This is an old game of destiny's. We wake in the morning, imagining that this day is to be like another; then we receive a letter, or make an acquaintance, or conceive an idea, or perform an action which utterly changes, for better or worse, our life—it may be suddenly, at a blow; it may be by degrees—at any rate destiny gives us no warning. We are face to face with a crisis before we know it.

Walking, by choice, along the quieter and darker streets of the town, in order to be the less observed and disturbed in this hour of bitter reflection, Philipof was startled, on turning into a by-street near the Custom House, to find that he had unconsciously marched into the midst of what we in England should describe as a 'free fight.' There were, apparently, four men and a woman engaged in the struggle, which was being conducted in silence, though, as Sasha could see, the combatants were very much in earnest in spite of that circumstance.

Now a fight was of all things that which, in his present condition of mind, appeared to Philipof the most desirable in the world. He was dying to let off steam, and here was the opportunity to hand. The only question was, into which scale should his weight be thrown? There could be little doubt as to this, however, since one of the combatants was a woman, and Sasha only waited long enough to discover which of the struggling, grunting creatures was on her side and which opposed her, and then he joined in.

It appeared that the woman and one man, a small one, were defending themselves from the assaults of three men, and Philipof naturally allied himself with the weaker party without asking foolish questions such as 'What was it all about?' and 'Who and what were the respective sides?' and 'What the rights and wrongs of the conflict?'

Two men were busily engaged with the small but active person who fought on the side of the lady, and Philipof determined to leave these three for the present to roll about the road together, while he attended to the third man. This fellow was busy also, for though he had seized his opponent and held her tightly with one hand, he was obliged to defend himself with the other from a by no means despicable attack on the part of the lady, who, unarmed as she was, was pummelling him about the face and neck with the greatest energy.

Philipof seized his arms. 'Let go of the lady,' he said; 'quickly—do you hear? Let her go!'

The man muttered a curse, and said something to his friends, who replied, bidding him 'wait a bit.'

But Philipof gave the gentleman no opportunity to 'wait a bit.' Seizing the fellow by the back of his neck with both hands, and getting one of them well behind his collar, he 'put on the screw' to so good effect that the fellow loosed his hold of his first opponent, and sprang round to face the new assailant, taking a dagger from his waist as he did so. Philipof saw the movement of his hand, and stepped backwards; then he brought down his stick, which was his only weapon, with all his force full upon the fellow's head.

Down went the man like an ox, and 'the subsequent proceedings' interested him no more.

'Run, Doonya, run!' shouted the little man on the ground, who, in spite of the unequal fight he was maintaining, had contrived to see and make a note of the new arrival and his victory over Doonya's antagonist. 'Run, Doonya—never mind me—hide yourself—get into safety!'

But the girl remained where she was, and seemed more disposed to re-enter the arena than

to take refuge in flight. Philipof now flew to the assistance of her companion, whose voice he seemed to recognise, though there was no time at this moment to verify his impression. One of his assailants had now seized Doonya's friend by the throat, while the second was endeavouring to secure the man's struggling feet and hands with a stout cord which he had produced from his pocket. Philipof closed with the first of these, and for a moment or two rolled with him about the road. Then Sasha got uppermost and knelt upon his chest. As he did so, the light from a street lamp fell upon his face.

'Aha!' said the man, 'Mr Philipof, is it? So these are the folks he chooses for his associates. Here, Gregory, make a note of it—Mr Philipof, the suspect, you know, interfering with us in the execution of our duty, and interfering on behalf of avowed revolutionists.'

He struggled in Sasha's grasp as he spoke, and stretched his hand for his weapon, a pistol. Sasha could see it sticking out of his girdle.

'No, no, none of that!' he cried. 'Fight fair, if you like. Here, get up, and start again, but no shooting!'

But the girl Doonya, whom Sasha had relieved of her assailant, took this opportunity of making sure that there should be no pistol practice by darting up behind Sasha's new opponent and seizing his pistol before he had accepted Philipof's invitation to stand up. Seeing this, and observing that Sasha was now reinforced by the girl, the man turned and ran. Doonya coolly raised the pistol and fired after him, but missed him, though she succeeded in greatly accelerating his movements. Then the third man, who had failed to secure his nimble little antagonist, jumped to his feet and followed his friend down the road, having first, however, unobserved by the rest, drawn his knife and plunged it into the fellow's body.

A deep groan from the latter immediately called the attention of Philipof and his companion to the wounded man, and now Sasha made a discovery which surprised him—for the first glance at the sufferer showed him that they were old acquaintances: it was none other than his fellow-prisoner of the fortress, the mendacious student, to whose instinct of self-preservation was to be traced the whole series of Philipof's misfortunes since the fatal afternoon at the Summer Gardens.

But Sasha's reflections on this point were quickly put to flight by the girl Doonya, who behaved rather strangely. Having knelt a moment at the student's side in order to bind his wound, for the blood flowed apace, she sprang to her feet, and seizing Philipof's hand, covered it with kisses, bursting into tears and sobbing wildly.

'God in heaven bless you and help you as you have helped and saved me this day,' she said. 'Oh, if you had not come, I dare not think what would have happened to us—poor Colya here, and me!' She hid her face in her hands, as though shutting out some dreadful picture. 'Do you know who they were?' she whispered, a moment after: 'bloodhounds—the spies of the Third Section. If I had fallen into their hands I should have been lost. God reward you again for it!'

'But what about poor Colya?' asked Philipof. 'Neither he nor you can remain here. Those fellows will return for their friend, who is only

stunned. You must be off at once. Is there any house you know to which we could take your friend? I fear he is badly wounded.'

'Can you carry him a short way? I could help a little,' said Doonya. 'There is a house close by, belonging to friends of ours. We were on the way there when those men pounced out at us.'

For answer, Philipof, with a laugh, raised the unconscious student in his strong arms. 'Lead the way quickly,' he said. 'I could carry him to Moscow!'

Away flitted Doonya, and after her ran Sasha with his burden. Down the street and round two corners, and into a dark lane that led to the river. Half-way up the lane she stopped at a door and knocked—three soft knocks. Instantly an old woman opened the door to the extent of three inches, and looked out. Seeing that Doonya was accompanied by Sasha she paused.

'*Dobru! droog!*' (a good friend) whispered the girl.

'*Prohodyce, dobru! droog!*' repeated the old lady, opening the door wider, and allowing them to pass.

Doonya led the way to a barely-furnished room upstairs, and here Philipof deposited his burden upon a couch. The student's eyes were now open, and he groaned deeply as Sasha laid him down, though this was performed gently enough.

'Ah,' he said faintly, 'so it is you, Philipof—good for evil, my friend—upon my word, I grow ashamed that I employed so good a fellow to save me from the gallows and share my crust at the fortress! And you are in at the death after all! Upon my word, it is an odd world.'

'Come, come,' said Philipof, who could think of nothing wiser to say: 'you are not so bad as all that.'

'I am though, my friend!' said the other. 'I am booked through—I feel it. Is Doonya safe?'

'Thanks to this brave stranger, yes!' said the girl. 'Thank him, Colya—as I do.'

'This is an old friend, Doonya,' said the wounded man; 'I did him a bad turn and he has done me a good one; he is the officer who stood by me on a certain occasion at the Summer Gardens—you remember—I accused him of—a certain act, and he accused me back—we went to jail together, the judges being undecided. Upon my word, Philipof, if I had known you as well then as I do now I should have chosen the fellow on the other side.'

Doonya looked with undisguised admiration in Philipof's face: 'You are very noble,' she said, with true Russian simplicity, 'and Colya's behaviour was mean and abominable—I have often told him so: it would have been nobler to take the consequences of his deed—and the glory of it.'

'Never mind either the consequences or the glory of it now, Doonya,' said poor Colya; 'in an hour or two I shall be beyond all that.—Philipof—I treated you badly once, but I swear to you I regret it—will you grant a favour to a dying man?'

'With pleasure,' said Sasha, who listened to all this as though it were happening in a dream.

'Take Doonya away somewhere and hide her for a while; the police will be here in an hour; take good care of her; she is worth it.—Doonya, send Kirilof here. I may as well die like a gentle-

man, with a doctor to hold my hand. Tell him to bring a notary with him.—I have something to dictate for your benefit, Philipof!'

'It is too late to benefit me,' said the last named with bitterness; 'but I promise to do what I can for your sister.'

The wounded man flushed through his deadly pallor:

'She is not my sister,' he said; 'she is nothing to me—and yet everything—but all that is over!'

Doonya came to the bedside and kissed the dying man's forehead without a word.

'Thanks!' said he; 'that will help me to die happily. Now go, Doonya—good-bye! if there is a God in Heaven I hope He will bless you.—Farewell, Philipof; hide her well and quickly. Send Kirilof and the notary—that condemned knife has scooped the life out of me! Ah, Philipof, if only you hadn't jogged my arm that day we should both have been saved a lot of trouble!'

THE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

THE Press Association is a very interesting and important organisation, of which very little is known outside the newspaper world, though most persons are more or less indebted to it. It is the leading news-collecting agency in the kingdom, a co-operative association of newspaper proprietors all over the country, formed at the time the telegraphs were taken over by the government about thirty years ago.

Up till that time there had been nothing of the kind. Newspapers were not in any way associated, but each relied on its own resources for getting news, often a difficult and costly business. Only a few—just the wealthier and the more powerful of the daily morning papers, chiefly, if not entirely, in London—could afford to organise the means of collecting news on anything like an adequate scale. The smaller London journals, and practically all the provincial press, were dependent on the great London dailies for their news of what was going on in the world.

Of course this total individualism of the provincial press kept country papers down at rather a poor level. They were bound to be very 'local' indeed, simply because their comparatively small circulation did not permit of the costly enterprise of the great metropolitan journal. It was long felt that some organised development was required in the interest of country papers, while even the big London journals might very well be benefited by a well-managed news agency. It was obvious that great waste was involved in the entirely independent action of a number of papers, each doing on its own account what, by a little system, might often be done by one representative of them all. One efficient report of a speech, for instance, would obviously serve for any number of papers, and in a great many cases, at least, one good descriptive account of any occurrence of interest would be as good as fifty. Yet every editor of a newspaper wishing to have a report of a speech delivered in a distant part of the country, or a descriptive account of the effect of a landslip or of a sensational shipwreck on a distant part of the coast, would have to incur the cost of sending a special representative on

an expensive journey, and, perhaps, the still more serious expense of telegraphing several newspaper columns of matter.

The great disadvantage at which country newspapers were conducted, and the wasteful extravagance of the chief London papers, from the absence of any united action in the newspaper world was long recognised, and in a small and tentative way the old telegraph companies—the Electric and International and the British and Irish Magnetic, had made some little effort to organise a system of news-supply when the great and important transfer of the telegraphs to state control put an end to enterprise in that direction, while, at the same time, it opened up wider facilities for more complete and efficient combination among the newspapers themselves. Meetings of provincial proprietors were, therefore, held in Manchester and London; and, as the result, the Press Association, Limited, was formed, with a nominal capital of £10,000 in shares of £10 each.

The 'P. A.,' as all newspaper men know it, is, it will thus be seen, a co-operative organisation of newspaper proprietors, who are divided into five classes—proprietors of daily morning papers, daily evening papers, tri-weekly, bi-weekly, and weekly. The individual journals of each class all contribute the same share of capital and get precisely the same service of news.

Thus a morning paper takes twelve £10 shares, an evening or tri-weekly six, a bi-weekly four, and a weekly two. A paper published only once a week, or on Wednesdays and Saturdays, obviously does not require the same service as one of the great London morning papers. It does not, of course, compete with a daily paper; its competition is chiefly with papers of its own class, and with them alone it requires to be put on a level. Each paper is charged for what it receives according to a certain scale; and if at the end of the year there is a profit on the year's business it only shows that the rate has been a little higher than it need have been, and it goes back into the pockets of the shareholders, or perchance into the reserve fund, which is now, after about thirty years of work and a business of some two millions of money, about £15,000.

The Press Association, it will be seen, is a little oasis of neutral ground, flourishing and fruitful amid the contending forces of journalism. The clash of opinions and the turmoil of argument never disturb its atmospheric serenity. In the press world it is a centre of unruffled calm, around which meteorologists tell us all storms revolve. It deals only with facts and matters of description, uncoloured reports of speeches, and such other things as may be published in any newspaper whatever opinions it may advocate or whatever party it may represent.

The association has a board of ten directors, all of them prominent newspaper proprietors, and five of whom form a committee of management, with Mr E. Robbins as the manager in charge. For many years the association, having its *clientèle* secured, and having therefore no occasion for show, was content to occupy decidedly shabby quarters in Wine Office Court, Fleet Street. Of late, however, its £10 shares have stood at a premium of £7, 10s., and with its £20,000 assets and a very flourishing and substantial business, the 'P. A.' has betaken itself to

more dignified accommodation not far from the foot of Ludgate Hill—14 New Bridge Street—which may be considered the centre of newspaper organisation, the Delphic oracle of the provincial and metropolitan press, with Mr Robbins playing the part of Apollo, in a handsomely-furnished room with stained-glass windows. This establishment is, of course, in telegraphic communication with the post-office, and in a room set apart for the purpose are a number of the finest modern telegraphic instruments for receiving and transmitting messages.

The staff for the supply of information comprises some of the ablest journalists in London. One section of it is in attendance at all the law-courts; others of its members are in the reporters' gallery and in the lobby of the House of Commons, and others constitute a sort of flying brigade, ready to take wing to any part of the kingdom in which anything of interest is going on. Each of the London police courts has some one always ready to represent the association, and in every quarter of the metropolis and in every important centre in the kingdom there are local agents on the lookout for news for headquarters; while, as in an ordinary newspaper-office, the 'flimsy' of the obscure but useful and hard-working 'liner' is regularly skimmed for items of interesting intelligence.

'P. A.' representatives do not as a rule go outside the United Kingdom; but the association trusts to Reuter's agency for foreign intelligence. It is in fact the sole agent for supplying country papers with Reuter's telegrams from abroad, while on the other hand the news collected in England by the Press Association is disseminated through the world by Reuter's company.

Primarily the object of the organisation is the supply of news and reports to provincial papers, and the shares are held only by the proprietors or managers of such papers; but any one may become a subscriber, and, as a matter of fact, not only country papers, but London, foreign, and colonial newspapers, and clubs, exchanges, and newsrooms, are regularly supplied with what they may require from the great network of which 14 New Bridge Street is the centre.

MR POTTER'S SPEECH.

CHAPTER II.

THE next morning Jones could hardly believe his eyes when he opened the copy of the *Westbeach Times*, which arrived by the early post, and discovered Potter's speech of the previous night reported in full. When convinced that it was really there in print, word for word, he was beside himself with joy. To an accompaniment of delighted laughter from Mrs Jones, he read it aloud from beginning to end, mimicking Potter's deep voice, dignified gestures, and statuesque pose.

The unlucky Jack, who had solemnly vowed to rise with the lark in order to interview Jones before the postman arrived, was fast asleep in bed, dreaming perchance of Katie and rose-embowered cottages.

Mr Potter, worn out by the exertions and agitation of the previous night, was also sunk in heavy slumber.

Katie, who was staying with a friend at Southpool, the neighbouring town, was serenely unconscious of all that had taken place.

Sir Joseph Maxwell, after hurriedly glancing through the copy of the paper, and finding no report of Potter's speech, had thrown it impatiently aside.

Mr and Mrs Jones had the joke all to themselves; and they thoroughly enjoyed it. Presently, however, a yearning came over Jones to go forth and spread the glad tidings.

'I'll take care that every soul in Westbeach knows about this before the day's over,' he exclaimed. 'Potter has always put on such ridiculous airs about his speechifying that every one will be glad to have a chance of poking fun at him. Why, Pearson, who was at the meeting last night, told me that he began by saying he was obliged, owing to want of time, pressure of business, and so on, to speak without notes or adequate preparation, and therefore hoped the audience would excuse any deficiencies, or some stuff of that sort. And yet the old humbug had written out every word of it, and learnt it off by heart. By Jove, it will make him look silly. Take my word for it, Mary, it will give me at least fifty votes. I consider myself as good as elected. I must be off at once, and get to work.'

'Won't you take the paper with you?'

'No. I shall want two or three copies. I'll pick up another at the office. Where's my hat? Oh! it's here. I'm off.'

'Did I tell you I was going to Southpool this morning?'

'No.'

'Yes, I am. I have to do some shopping. I shall be back at twelve o'clock.'

'Very well. Good-morning.'

'Good-morning.'

It must be confessed that Jones, though not a bad fellow in the main, was distinctly coarse-fibred. No suspicion that the task he had undertaken with so much zest might have been performed with more delicacy by some one else ever suggested itself to his mind. To use his own expression—his phraseology consisted largely of pithy if somewhat vulgar figures of speech—he meant to 'let Potter have it straight from the shoulder.'

'Have you seen the *Westbeach Times* yet?' he asked almost every one he met.

'No, I haven't.'

'Well, get a copy at once. There's going to be a run on it to-day. You won't get one if you don't hurry up.'

'Is there anything special in it?'

'Yes; a full report of Potter's speech last night.'

'But Potter never made a speech. He couldn't. The meeting was broken up.'

'That's where the joke comes in. Potter always speaks impromptu, you understand. He didn't speak last night, and yet there's a verbatim report of the speech he didn't make. See the point of it?'

'Well, if that's so, I should say that Potter's a humbug.'

'Oh, don't take my word for it. Get a copy of the paper, and look for yourself.'

As Jones saw one after another making his way towards the *Times* office after a conversation of this kind, he knew that the story would travel

from one end of Westbeach to the other before many hours were over. He strutted gaily along, humming a lively air, and smiling pleasantly to himself. He felt at peace with all mankind—with the exception of Potter—and greeted his opponents as affably as if they had pledged themselves to vote for him, as indeed he hoped they eventually would.

He was in this pleasant frame of mind when he encountered Mr Gregson, the most crusty and dogmatic old gentleman in Westbeach.

'Good-morning, Mr Gregson.'

'Morning.'

'Have you seen Potter's speech in the *Times*?'

'No, I haven't.'

'Then you'd better get a copy. There's going to be'—

'I have a copy.'

'Then you haven't examined it very carefully.'

'Yes, I have.'

'My dear sir, you can't have done. The speech is reported in full. I saw it with my own eyes. You see the joke of it is that last night Potter didn't make a speech, and yet his speech'—

'I don't care a straw about his speech. Wouldn't have wasted my time reading it if it had been in, but it isn't.'

'I tell you it is.'

'Then show it me,' retorted Gregson, taking a copy of the *Times* from his pocket, and handing it to Jones.

No words can describe the amazement of Jones when he searched every column of the paper without discovering a trace of the speech.

'This is most extraordinary,' he stammered at length. 'I—I certainly can't find it.'

'Of course you can't find it, because it isn't there.'

'But I saw it with my own eyes, I tell you.'

'Then you've either been hoaxed or you're trying to hoax me,' snarled Gregson, returning the paper to his pocket, and moving away; 'but you'll find I'm a little too wide-awake for that kind of thing, I can assure you.'

For some moments Jones stood petrified. A man never feels so helpless as when he begins to doubt the evidence of his senses. He had seen the speech, he had read it aloud to his wife, and yet, according to the evidence of his own eyes, it had no material existence; it was but a phantom of the brain, a creation of the imagination. Jones felt his flesh creep. There was something uncanny about the affair.

'Can I possibly have been dreaming,' he muttered, passing his hand with a gesture of bewilderment across his forehead. 'If I have, what an unmitigated ass I have made of myself. The laugh will be against me and no mistake—not against Potter. And yet it's incredible. I saw the thing as plainly as I see that boy there.'

The boy in question had a bundle of newspapers under his arm. As Jones glanced at him he promptly advanced.

'*Westbeach Times*, sir?'

'Eh?' exclaimed the bewildered Jones. 'No, certainly not—that is to say, yes, I will take a copy.'

'Thank you, sir.'

'Here, don't go. Stop a minute.'

He glanced hurriedly through the paper. There was no sign of the speech.

'There's sixpence,' he said to the boy. 'You can keep the change. Now, look through that paper carefully. If you can find a full report of Mr Potter's speech at the Town Hall last night I'll give you half-a-crown.'

The boy glanced up at Jones with an expression which suggested some doubt of the latter's sanity, but stimulated by the offer of so large a reward, he examined the paper with extraordinary diligence.

'Well, can you find it?' asked Jones impatiently.

'No, I can't,' replied the disappointed urchin.

Jones walked off homewards without another word.

'I must place myself under treatment for it,' he muttered as he walked along. 'I shall have a look through the paper at home, and if Potter's speech isn't in it, I shall consult a doctor at once.'

At that moment he met the Rev. Marmaduke Thompson, B.A., to whom he had gleefully imparted the joke about Potter five minutes before. The Rev. Marmaduke had a paper in his hand, and eyed Jones severely.

'This is a copy of the *Westbeach Times*,' he said sternly. 'I have examined it carefully, and I find there is not the slightest foundation for the story you have circulated about Mr Potter. If you are the victim of a silly hoax, I should advise you to expose it, for your own sake, without a moment's delay. If, on the contrary, you are the perpetrator of it, I must tell you frankly, that I cannot undertake to vote for any one who has so little regard for the truth, and I shall use any influence I may possess to oppose your election.'

'I tell you I saw the speech with my own eyes,' cried Jones desperately. 'I read it aloud to my wife. How could I have done that if it wasn't in the paper?'

The Rev. Marmaduke shrugged his shoulders and passed on. He represented at least a score of votes, and Jones groaned despairingly.

'Look here, Jones,' said a voice at his elbow. 'What have you been spreading this cock-and-bull story about Potter for? A joke's all very well in its way, but a man in your position, a candidate on the eve of election, should leave this sort of thing to the comic papers. It's undignified, you know; upon my word, it is. I've heard some pretty severe things said about you by those you sent off on a wild-goose chase to get a copy of the paper. You've got yourself into hot water, I can tell you. I shouldn't be surprised if every man you've taken in plumps for Potter.'

The speaker was Mr White, the chairman of Jones's election committee. Poor Jones began to lose his temper.

'I suppose it never enters your head that I told them what I implicitly believed to be the truth,' he exclaimed indignantly.

'Well, the facts speak for themselves,' rejoined White. 'I have worked hard for you up to the present, and I shall still give you my vote, but I tell you plainly that in future you may do your canvassing yourself. Good-morning.'

In the meantime, Jack, who seldom rose before noon on a Saturday, was lying in a state of blissful semi-unconsciousness, blinking dreamily at the window, hearing afar off the frizzling of his morn-

ing rasher, at peace with himself and all the world. No disturbing memory of his prospective father-in-law's ultimatum ruffled the calm serenity of his slumberous soul. How long he might have remained in this enviable state, if he had been left to himself, it is impossible to say. A resounding knock at the front door awakened him to the realities of life. He dragged his watch from underneath the pillow.

'Good gracious,' he groaned, 'it's eleven o'clock.'

He jumped out of bed and instinctively made for the door, which he opened and held slightly ajar. A shiver went through him as he did so, for he heard the deep bass voice of Mr Potter, who was standing on the steps outside.

'Is Mr Wilde in?'

'Yes, sir,' replied the servant; 'but he's not up yet.'

'Not up yet,' replied Potter in a tone that made Jack's flesh creep.

'No, sir; but we expect him down every minute, sir. Will you come in and wait, sir?'

'No, I won't come in and wait. Tell him that I called; tell him that Mr Potter called at eleven o'clock and was informed that he was not up yet. He'll understand what that means.'

The door closed. Mr Potter was gone. Jack understood only too well what was meant by that ominous message. He clutched his hair with both hands and groaned.

'I've done it this time. What an idiot I am. I might have known I shouldn't wake up in time on a Saturday morning. I should never have gone to bed. I'm an ass, that's what I am; an unmitigated ass. I've made Potter an enemy for life. He'll never forgive me.'

His eyes fell on his trousers hanging on the back of a chair. He dashed wildly at them.

'I'll have it out of Jones, anyway. If he's made an ass of Potter and of me, I'll make an ass of him too before I've done with him—see if I don't.'

He swallowed a hasty breakfast, and dashed off to interview Jones.

'Hallo,' shouted a friend on the other side of the street, 'have you heard the joke about Potter?'

With an ambiguous wave of the hand he hurried on.

'It's all over the place already,' he groaned, and five minutes later he was ringing furiously at Jones's bell.

'Is Mr Jones in?' he asked the servant who appeared.

'No, sir.'

'Is Mrs Jones in?'

'No, sir.'

'Well, look here, you know who I am—don't you?'

'Oh yes, sir—Mr Wilde.'

'Well, I sent Mr Jones a copy of our paper last night. I've a particular reason for wanting to look at it. You know it by sight—don't you?—the *Westbeach Times*. Just see if you can find it for me.'

'I can't, sir. Mrs Jones went to Southpool this morning, and took it to read in the train. It's very queer, but Mr Jones came in a few minutes ago, and hunted for it high and low; and when he heard that Mrs Jones had taken

it with her he took on dreadfully. I believe he's gone to the station to meet her, sir.'

'When is she expected back?'

'At twelve o'clock, sir.'

Jack darted away to the station, leaving the astonished servant gazing after him with open mouth. Presently he ran against Mr White, who quietly but firmly buttonholed him.

'Well, Jones has made a nice fool of himself this morning,' he said. 'He's been spreading a cock-and-bull story about Potter's speech being reported in full in your paper.'

'But Potter didn't make a speech,' replied Jack.

'Of course he didn't. Every one knows that. Jones wanted to insinuate that Potter learns his speeches off by heart, and had given you the manuscript beforehand as you couldn't be present at the meeting—do you see? I couldn't believe you'd be such a fool as to print a speech that had never been delivered. So I bought a paper. Of course the speech wasn't in it.'

'Of course not,' murmured Jack, who, not knowing exactly what had taken place, was afraid of committing himself.

'And yet the fellow had the assurance to say that he'd seen it with his own eyes, or words to that effect. He'll do himself a lot of harm by tricks of that kind. I've told him so. Good-morning.'

In a moment Jack realised the situation, and saw that if by any lucky chance he could get hold of the paper before Jones, the whole tide of battle might be turned in Potter's favour. Jones might protest till he was hoarse, but as he was a prejudiced witness, the public would never accept his testimony when they found it contradicted by the evidence of their own senses. Every one in the newspaper office had been bribed to maintain inviolable secrecy with regard to the suppression of the first edition; and Jack was confident that the secret would be well kept, provided he could only secure the one copy that contained a report of the speech. The fruits of victory would remain with the one who obtained that copy. If Jones got hold of it he would convince all Westbeach by ocular demonstration of the truth of his story. If it fell into Jack's hands Potter was sure of a triumphant acquittal.

It was now within a few minutes of twelve o'clock, and Mrs Jones, with or without the fateful paper, must be speeding rapidly towards Westbeach. Jack glanced cautiously into the station. There was Jones on the platform gesticulating almost frantically to a group of men who stood looking at him and at each other with incredulous smiles. Anxious as he was, Jack could not help chuckling at the comical way in which Jones's triumph had been turned, for the moment, at least, into defeat. He carefully avoided showing himself, however, fearing that Jones would immediately demand an explanation. His plan was to pounce on Mrs Jones and induce her on some pretext or other to part with the paper, before Jones himself appeared on the scene.

In another minute the train rushed in. It was unusually full. There was quite a block at the gates as the passengers crowded out. Mrs Jones was quite a dozen yards away, before Jones, who had managed to struggle out before Jack, could overtake her.

'Mary,' he exclaimed breathlessly, 'I want that paper—the *Westbeach Times*—you took away with you to read. Where is it?'

'What a start you gave me,' she replied. 'Is anything wrong?'

'Where's the paper?' he cried. 'I want the paper, the paper.'

'The paper. It's here. No, it isn't. I'm very sorry. I must have left it in the train. I forgot all about it.'

Jones turned from his astonished spouse, and rushed to the station, preceded by Jack, who had overheard the conversation. Westbeach was the terminus of a branch line, and the train was still standing at the platform. As the two men began to examine the carriages at the same moment, they naturally came into collision.

'What are you doing here, Wilde?' exclaimed Jones suspiciously.

'I want that copy of our paper I sent you,' retorted Jack defiantly.

'What do you want it for?'

'You've been trying to hoax the public at our expense, and I'm going to show you up. Do you think we're going to have the reputation of the *Times* ruined by you?'

'I tell you that Potter's speech is in that paper,' shouted Jones. 'I saw it with my own eyes.'

He naturally couldn't have seen it with any one else's, and he had made the remark before; but the poor man was too excited to vary his phraseology.

'You must be going off your head, Jones, if you suppose that any one will believe such nonsense, unless you can give them proof of it in black and white. Don't push your elbows into me, please.'

'Will you get out of my way?'

The struggle might have ended in blows, if a stalwart porter had not appeared on the scene.

'Now, gentlemen,' he said, 'what's the matter? If you've lost anythin' it ain't any use lookin' in them carriages. I've examined every one of them myself.'

'Did you find anything?'

'Nothing at all but a newspaper.'

'What paper?'

'A *Westbeach Times*.'

'I'll give you a shilling for it,' cried Jones. 'Hand it over.'

'Stop. I'll give you half-a-crown,' exclaimed Jack.

'Five shillings,' shouted Jones, at the same time snatching the paper out of the porter's hand as he drew it out of his pocket.

Before Jack could interfere, he had glanced at the page on which he had seen Potter's speech. It was not there. He turned pale, and the paper slipped from his trembling fingers.

'My brain *must* be softening,' he groaned. 'I could have sworn I saw the thing. I could have taken my Bible oath on it. Yet I suppose I dreamt it. Look here, Wilde, I expect you'll have to put a paragraph or two in about this affair, but let me down as easily as you can. I shall be chaffed to death as it is, so you needn't be too hard on me.'

'No, no,' replied Jack, who was shrewd enough to conceal his own bewilderment. 'Certainly not, my dear fellow; but really, you know, you must

be more careful in future about making assertions of that kind without sufficient proof.'

'I shall,' murmured poor Jones, 'I shall indeed.'

He was moving away, when the porter tapped him on the shoulder.

'What about that five bob as you promised me, sir?'

'Oh yes,' replied Jones, 'I forgot.'

He meekly paid the five shillings, and walked away so meek and crestfallen that even Jack was half inclined to pity him. Still Jack's relief was so intense that he could almost have executed a jig, but for the inquisitive eye of the porter. He picked up the paper, and made off at full speed to report progress to Potter.

'Well, this is a rum go,' he murmured joyously. 'Of course this isn't the paper I sent him—it can't be. But he thinks it is, and the other's lost; and unless somebody who has heard of the joke happens to find it, Potter will score every time.'

At the moment he attached little or no importance to the disappearance of the paper which Jones had actually received, but he grew more and more uneasy as he began to reflect that in all possibility it must have been carried away by somebody who got out at Westbeach.

'It would be Jones's turn to score if that turned out to be the case,' he muttered gloomily. 'He would get the laugh on his side with a vengeance. I'm afraid Potter will never feel easy in his mind till he knows what has become of that paper, or forgive me until I get hold of it.'

He was relieved to find that Mr Potter had just gone out, and that Miss Potter had just come in. A slim, pretty, brown-eyed girl of eighteen advanced joyously to meet him.

'Is that you, Jack? Come into the library. Papa's out, but he'll soon be back. He's awfully busy, you know—quite an important personage. I do hope he'll be elected. What a fine speech he made last night. I've just been reading the report of it in your paper.'

'In our paper,' cried Jack. 'Where is it? Where did you get it?'

'Why, whatever's the matter with you, Jack? I picked it up in the railway carriage I came from Southpool in a few minutes ago. Somebody left it on the seat, and I saw papa's name, and thought I should like to read his speech. Here it is.'

A glance told Jack that it was the identical paper he had sent to Jones. He flung his hat to the other end of the room, took the bewildered girl in his arms, and kissed her again and again. As he did so, he saw her pretty face become suddenly grave, and he glanced round. Mr Potter stood in the doorway, glaring through his gold-rimmed spectacles, boiling with wrath, and speechless with amazement.

'I was under the impression,' he said in his most majestic manner, when at length he had become articulate, 'I was under the impression that I had forbidden you, sir, ever to enter my house again. Why do I find you here? I have just heard that Jones, having told the story without showing the paper as a proof of it, is supposed to have made a fool of himself; but as soon as he produces the paper'—

'He never will produce it,' exclaimed Jack. 'He'll never set eyes on it again. It's here.'

Mr Potter, having a strong sense of personal dignity, did not execute a step-dance, or fling his hat about, but his jubilation was so intense that he consented to his daughter's engagement to Jack on the spot.

A week later he was elected by an overwhelming majority, his victory being to a considerable extent due to the very circumstance which at one time he imagined would insure his defeat.

The secret never leaked out. Nevertheless, he was taught a valuable lesson. He never afterwards spoke without notes, or attempted to pose as an impromptu orator.

AN UNEXPLORED EL DORADO.

THE colony of British Guiana, or Demerara, as it is popularly called, is familiar enough to English ears. But it is mostly associated in English minds with the beautiful crystal sugar of our breakfast tables. Comparatively few people entertain any intelligent notions about the colony itself, and still fewer about its great 'hinterland'—that enormous extent of territory lying westward of the Essequibo river, the sovereignty of which the neighbouring republic of Venezuela disputes with Great Britain. Nor is this surprising, considering that fifteen years ago the district was practically unknown to the Guianese colonists themselves. In the early years of the century, under the Dutch, it had been more or less 'settled'; but the blur of time had effaced the memory thereof from the colonists of to-day as effectually as the reclaiming hand of nature had obliterated all traces of occupancy. The Central Africa into which Stanley led the van of modern exploration was hardly more unknown.

The whole region was a howling wilderness, known only to the native wood-cutters and a few daring naturalists and orchid-hunters, and the devoted missionaries who sought the Indians in their forest homes. With the exception of the speculative red line on English maps, the more distant and larger portion of it remained even beyond the pale of political sway—hence the international imbroglio that has arisen over it, but with which this account has nothing to do save incidentally. This was the condition of things in the early eighties. Then came the discovery of gold in such profusion as to lead to the inference that the rich gold-fields of Venezuela were but the outer fringe of an auriferous belt situated in this territory, which was probably the lost El Dorado of Sir Walter Raleigh's fruitless quest.

But alluring as were the prospects thus held out to the colonists, it soon became apparent that a stubborn fight with nature would have to be waged ere those treasure-houses could be rifled. And before anything could be attempted in this direction Venezuela put in her claim, the present *status quo* was established, and English enterprise, on anything like an adequate scale, had to hold its hand. That the country, however, is a veritable El Dorado is beyond dispute. I have

traversed a considerable portion of it, and can testify to the fact that it literally oozes gold in clay, in gravel, and in quartz. Even the beds of the creeks are sown with the precious metal, and would haply reveal their secret to the sunlight did not their sombre, wine-tinted waters jealously conceal the ravishing sight. But this inestimable wealth lies, for the most part, buried in a land of death. Nothing short of an army of woodsmen, engineers, and railway constructors can bring it within the reach of man. And this requires enormous capital, indomitable pluck, and assured guarantees. No one doubts that Great Britain possesses the two first essentials in abundance; but it remains to be seen whether she can afford the latter, which, after all, is the greatest of the three.

Now, let us in imagination pay a flying visit to this region. As a matter of course, there are no roads. Our route lies by water, and we travel in the crankiest and cranpiest of 'dugouts'—this being the country's only conveyance. For a while the journey is ordinary enough, if deadlly monotonous. We paddle and paddle along over the ruddy waters of a great river, say the Mazaruni, under a blazing sun in a cloudless sky, and with nothing in sight but the thick, rank vegetation that flanks the stream to the water's edge. The first night we camp under the old adzupas (huts) of a mission station, and that is our farewell to civilisation.

At dawn we are up and away; and in an hour or two come to the cataracts, which are perhaps the fiercest and most complicated on the continent. Only the life-trained skill of the 'Boveiander' boatmen (of whom more anon) dare encounter them. The journey at this stage can no longer be called monotonous. We firmly believe that in facing these seething maelströms we are taking our lives into our hands. And perhaps we are, to some extent; but the Boveianders know very well what they are about, and if they decide to go on we are safe enough.

This novel experience over, we have time to consider the sun—and he sees to it that we do. The heat that pours down from the brazen sky through a perfectly stagnant atmosphere is akin to that of a furnace. And when we branch off into a creek and get some shade, it proves nothing to be thankful for. For these creeks sometimes wind through dense forests that the sunlight never penetrates, and they thus become pestiferous with the reek of nature's innumerable and combined exhalations. Moreover, the vegetation often interlaces right across the stream, and we have to tear our way through it, disturbing in the operation myriads of venomous insects, which assail us with great fierceness and determination.

Night falls early, and we must make camp. This is done at the most inviting, or, I should say, the least repulsive place, that suggests itself, without too much consideration as to time; for, in going farther, we are apt to fare not merely worse, but mayhap disastrously. Seldom is there room for a tent, even the tiniest, and hammocks have to be slung between the trees.

A great deal has been written about the alligators and reptiles of Guiana attacking the traveller. This, however, is mostly fanciful. They are not aggressive. The malaria is what we have

to dread. We can see, smell, and even feel it as it rises and hangs in a dark, filmy vapour on the motionless air. If the system is at all predisposed, it is apt to soak in—but in that case you ought not to be there. The real cause of infection is the mosquito, which abounds in the forest; and, unless you can protect yourself with netting from his attacks, you run a considerable risk. And how many can do this successfully night after night for weeks, perhaps months? Only a fractional percentage of the pioneers have met a tragic end from the reptile's lethal lance, or been devoured by the sneaking alligator; but hundreds of strong men in the bloom of health have been punctured by the mosquito's tiny sting at night, and awakened with fevered blood, never to leave their hammocks more. Truly here we have 'the pestilence that walketh by night,' and hence much of the great hinterland of Guiana is a land of death.

For the most part the face of the country is covered with these great forests, intersected in all directions by cataract-broken rivers and streams; but beyond the forest region—where the gold-fields apparently mostly lie—are immense savannahs. Some are elevated and healthful, and may one day become important cattle-raising centres. Others are low-lying and boggy in the dry season, and become marshes and lakes in the rainy season. These will probably always be worthless. Considerable mountain chains occur, but toward the southern and western borders—in so far as there may be said to exist any 'borders.' Much of the interior tableland is well adapted for agricultural purposes, being well-watered and fertile, with excellent elevations. But the rivers not being navigable, and the distance from the sea being so considerable, the railway is a *sine qua non* for development.

The fluvial system is complicated and even peculiar. Countless tributaries of the great feeders of the Orinoco and Amazon interlace and overlap in bewildering confusion, and frequently they bifurcate and flow one into another in natural canals which the Indians call 'itaboos.' One result of this is that small canoes navigate the face of the country in every direction. Indian and Brazilian traders (the latter mostly slave-dealers) frequently making the journey between the Orinoco and the Amazon.

Of the fauna and flora a great deal might be said did space permit, for the naturalist and the botanist have not exhausted the marvellous resources of this country. I have frequently encountered lizards, moths, and beetles that are not described in the standard works. And this is true to a far greater extent of the herbs. To fully understand this, one has only to compare his experience of our own medical practice with the work of the Indian peiman. The most pernicious of the local fevers are amenable to his treatment; and he can cure the ugliest of wounds, even when gangrene has taken place, as by a magical touch. More than this, he can neutralise the deadliest serpent's poison if he operates in time; and he has a system of inoculation against the effects of snake-bite the efficacy of which I have myself witnessed on two occasions. And all this is done with vegetable preparations—plus a great deal of mummery.

The whole extent of country with which I am

dealing is very thinly peopled. The pure-blooded Indians for the most part inhabit the forest and savannah regions, and live a nomadic life. They camp, cultivate, work out the clearing and move on, supplementing their ground provisions with the spoils of hunting and fishing. Their principal industries are weaving matting and feather and bead work, which they periodically take down to the English settlements or sell to traders. They are of a decidedly low type, but entirely inoffensive and generally hospitable unless they are ill-treated; in that case they vanish with the celerity of mice. Many missions have been established among them, and they are almost all nominally Christians.

There is, however, another class of inhabitants, who dwell along the central and lower reaches of the great rivers, although they penetrate to considerable distances into the interior, and have, in fact, made the whole region between the Essequibo and Orinoco their own. These are the 'Boveianders,' a half-breed race descended from the intermarriage of the old Dutch settlers with the aboriginal women. There are also black Boveianders, who are descended from the admixture of Indians with the runaway negroes who fled to the wilderness in the days of slavery. In colour, the Boveianders of Dutch extraction are of a light-brown yellow, somewhat fairer than mulattoes, and having a strong European cast of countenance. They are well-formed and generally good-looking; these of negro strain are of a dirty reddish-black, somewhat flat-featured, and ugly. In habit and manner the white is tidy, clean, pleasant, and attractive; the black slovenly, foul, sycophantic, and repulsive. Their language is English, but so full of Indian and Dutch idioms and variations as to be something of a Volapuk.

The customs of the white Boveiander, like his language, are a combination of savagery and civilisation. Socially as well as ethnologically, the European and Indian meet in his personality. Prior to the discovery of gold in the north-west territory, these people were little known in the colony except to the government and among the wood-traders, their chief industry being wood-cutting. As boatmen they are in their own way to be classed amongst the most expert in the world, combining with the unerring instinct of the Indian the superior intelligence and calm intrepidity of their Dutch ancestry. Of late years they have been brought more into touch with the colonists, and already an interesting change has been wrought in their life.

The Boveianders existed when Great Britain acquired the Colony of Guiana from the Dutch in 1814, and in their half-wild, independent way, acknowledged the British sovereignty, and have ever proved law-abiding citizens. It is a notable fact that, up to the time of the recent controversy the present generation actually remained in ignorance of the existence of a foreign country in their neighbourhood; to them, indeed, the Union Jack and Mr McTurk, the magistrate, filled out their conception of government and authority. And it is on these people's claims that Great Britain will mostly rely to establish her rights under the fifty years' clause of the Arbitration Treaty with Venezuela. Thus may they give their name to that portion of the colony ere the last is heard of the dispute. Nor will its adoption

be inappropriate in a topographical sense, for the word is a corruption of the phrase 'above yonder'—signifying the dwellers above the cataracts, over yonder.

THE LIGHT-KEEPER'S STORY.

EVERY one in Pengarrook knew that old Abel Williams 'had a story;' they called it 'Abel's secret,' because he had never told it to anybody, though many had tried to draw it from him when he sat in his favourite corner in the bar of the 'Sea Horse' of an evening. He was as loquacious an old man as you could meet on the coast from Weston to the Land's End; but if he imagined that an attempt was being made to draw him on to speak of his secret he would shrink back against the wall and pull silently at his pipe until closing time, when he would get up and go with the curtest of 'good-nights.'

I forget how it came about that Abel was induced to tell me his story. I used to meet him every fine day on the beach, where he sat watching the fishermen mend boats or nets, smoking stolidly; 'waiting,' he said, 'till I'm called to sign on for the last voyage.' He took me, a comparative stranger, into confidence, and I write what he told me now as well as I can in his own words.

'It was in the year '21 or '22, I can't rightly say which, for I'm going on for ninety-five now, and forget things, dates and the like. Anyway, it was about then I was in the Light Service and was ordered to the Carpenter's Rocks Lighthouse, down Land's End way. You don't know it; 'twas washed away, and never a stone left, in the winter of '52—one of the most awful storms that ever blew on this coast. Folks on shore looked and saw the light when the sun went down, and at dawn it was gone, swept clean away with the three men, whose bodies were never found to get a Christian burying. Well, in those days in the twenties only two men manned a light; they've changed that, and now it's always three—never less. If there'd been three in the Carpenter's Rocks in my day, I'd never have had this here story to tell.

'My mate was a man named Wolf—George Wolf—and his name fitted him, though maybe I oughtn't to say it, him being so long gone to his account. You've never been in a lighthouse? Well, you don't know what it is for two men to be shut up together day arter day, night arter night, and nought to hear but the wash of the sea and the scream of the wind, with now and again the cry of a gull, which isn't a cheery thing any time, and most lowering to the spirits when you hear it and naught else alive. Two men shut up together are apt to have words when the louness presses heavy. I'm not quarrelsome by nature; always was for peace and quiet—always; but George Wolf—well, perhaps the fault wasn't all his, though, if 'twere my last word, he'd a tongue like any scold. Anyway, things didn't go smooth in the living-room on Carpenter's Rocks; and many's the time up on the gallery, cleaning the lamp glasses outside, with a rail betwixt us and the sea-boil fifty feet below, I was minded to give him the push that would send him over. I never laid finger on him though; not but that I could have done it, me being a powerful strong man in

them days, and he—well, I could ha' held him up with one hand and trounced him sound with the other. I never touched him, though sore tempted by his tongue. I don't think he was a healthy man; he'd a yellow face, and his eyes was a queer dead-blue, with no life in them, so to speak. I did threaten him once, and that's the beginning of the story. Wolff was going for his shore spell, and as he steps down the ladder to the boat I says to him, "George Wolff," I says, "if you was more of a man, I'd ha' give you a proper lesson with my fists ere now. When you're ashore do you ask for a change, lest I come to do you an injury." He answers me back, "I ain't afeard of you, Abel Williams, big brute as you be; and I don't go to ask to be transferred to no other light. But I'll tell you what I will do: I'll report that you threaten me with violence." Them was his words: "I'll report that you threaten me with violence." I remembered 'em after on the night—on the night I'm agoing to tell you about. It was a decent man, one Anson, that relieved Wolff, and sorry I was when Wolff's spell ashore was up.

The boat that brought Wolff back and took Anson off was the last that came nigh the lighthouse for a matter of three weeks, the sea ran that high, you understand; it was October, and the 'noctial gales blew as if they'd never stop. The Carpenter's Rocks got their name from the reefs about; on every point of the compass you could see ragged black points in the white surf, edged tools every one, that would tear the bottom out of the stoutest boat ever put out from Plymouth. It needed nice steering to make the light safely in fair weather; with just a capful of wind we were clean cut off; and that October it blew, day in day out, till you felt the tower tremble to the smash of the sea, and shake as if it was a living thing afraid. It's ill to feel that in the living-room, with no light excep' a dull lamp, and oilskins and kit hanging, like drowned sailors' ghosts, in the shadows.

I forget what led to it, but one night, two weeks or thereabout arter Wolff's return, we had words—high words. Wolff always looked bad in coarse weather, and when he looked bad I did my all to keep a hand over myself. I was afraid of him; not of his doing me a hurt, you understand, he being a poor creature at best; but I was afraid, he looked so queer. When a big sea come "clop!" I'd see his lips go white and his hand shake, and he wouldn't be fit to climb the stair for an hour. He wasn't a man for a light on the mainland let alone the Carpenter's Rocks, where a boat could only come within hail in fair weather, and that's the truth. The wind that night was roaring, and whiles you'd feel the seas strike and shoot up the tower-side, and then you'd hear the crash of the falling water. We'd put things right in the lantern, and glad I was to come down and put on dry clothes. Maybe it was ten o'clock, and I was thinking to turn in, when Wolff, who'd gone a bit up the stair to see that all was fast, comes down, and he says, "Are you deaf you couldn't hear me hollerin'?" and sets to calling me ill names. You couldn't hear a fog-horn in the room itself for the wind and rain and sea, but Wolff was looking downright bad, so I put his words behind me, and I says, "What's amiss that you got hollerin'?" "There's something amiss," he says, civil enough by reason

of my easy-tempered answer; "something's not fast above." "I'll come," I says, and slipped on my oilskins, he going to climb the stair in his slow way. When Wolff was looking bad he went aloft as slow as any landsman. I went arter, and found him waiting at the trap, a little, low door that gave on the gallery you see railed round the lantern. It opened inwards, and the wind pressed so that you'd think a man outside was shoving hard and steady all his might. The two of us let it open with our four hands, and Wolff—he was gasping like a fish. I crawled out, the rain stinging on my back and the wind tearing the ears off my head; when I got to the wind'ard the force of the gale held me pressed against the lantern like a bit of paper. I drew myself, nearer lying than crawling, and come on a corner of sheet-lead the wind lifted and dropped with a thundering clap. It was nothing to harm, so I crawled as quick as might be back to the trap, where Wolff was sitting with his legs on the stair inside. "Go on down!" I yells. "But what's amiss?" he roars back. "Nothing to hurt," I yells, though his ear was but a hand's-breadth from my mouth. "Go on down, and I'll tell you." The wind and sleet was cutting into the bones of me, and it wasn't sense to sit there bawling at a man. "Go on!" I shouts impatient, and, he not going, I gave him a push to make him understand.

'It wasn't a push to call such, no more'n if I'd been putting the cat off my knee; but Wolff must have been moving, for down he slipped into the dark, and I heard him bumping down the stair as he fell. "Serve him right for an obstinate fool," I says to myself, for he'd kept me out in the wind and wet, and I'd no thought of his taking more harm than a few bruises. I got the trap shut and made it fast, and then come down. It was a corkscrew stair, two full turns of it, and very steep. When I got to the bottom where I see the light in the living-room through the crack, I trod on something. I pressed the latch, and Wolff, lying all of a heap at the stair-foot against the door, burst it open. "Stunned!" I says; for a man might well get stunned falling all that way. I pulled off his oilies, and lifted him into his bunk, dipped a clout in the bucket and put it on his head, and then I got the brandy and put a drop into his mouth. Even then I'd no thought 'at he was worse'n stunned, but by-and-by, when he didn't come round, I stooped over to listen for his breathing, and then my hands fair broke loose and tore the clothes off his chest to listen for the heart-beat, you understand. I listened till my own heart was shaking me, for Wolff's chest inside was still as a church-vault, and I knew he was a dead man.

"When I knew that, I pulled the sheet over his face, and drew my chair to the other side the room, as far away's I could get, and got out my pipe, while I looked at Wolff lying in his bunk over mine. First I thought, "How'll I lie down in my own bunk to-night with his dead corpse over me?"—just that you know, same as if it had been a leak in the deck, and how was a man to sleep with water falling on his face? Then, as I smoked, things began to shape themselves, as one may say, in questions. Did Wolff fall down the stair because I pushed him? If Wolff fell because I pushed him, was his blood on my head? There was more questions, but I durstn't answer

'em. Then I thinks, "You didn't ought to sit and smoke with George Wolff lying dead there." So I puts out my pipe, and sits like a figurehead, for, what with the raging and tearing outside and the stillness in Wolff's bunk, I was muddled-like.

'It would be near dawn when I got drowsy in my chair, and got to dreaming, though it wasn't like a dream. I saw Wolff sit up, and though his eyes was a dead man's eyes, he spoke plain but slow-like, as if he thought for each word. He says, "You shoved me down the stair, Abel Williams, and killed me. The bruises shows it; and you durstn't throw me overside, because I've reported you for offering violence."

'At that I starts up, wide awake. The corpse was a corpse, but it had spoke, and pricked out the course to steer, as one may say. I took the lamp off the wall, and went upstairs to the lantern-room, for I couldn't bide no longer below. I slep' a little, being wore out, but by fits and starts, for Wolff, he come peeping down, a-nodding at me, and saying quite civil-like, "You killed me, and you'll swing for it; you know you durstn't throw me over, because I reported you threatened me."

'Now it hadn't been my thought to do aught but let the poor dead corpse lie respectful till the relief-boat come off to the distress-signal I'd hoist at daybreak; but when Wolff come like that in my dreams I begun to get uneasy in my mind. The questions begun again, and never stopped till daybreak, when I got up, and soused my head to clear my brains. The storm was raging as bad as ever when I went up and lay flat on my back to run up the "distress." As I shook it from the staff-top I says to myself, "You wouldn't be in such a hurry to call for help if you'd killed Wolff," and I got comfort thinking other folk would think that too. Still it was poor comfort; it's a terrible thing to be shut up like that alone with a corpse, and think all the time, "If it wasn't the fall from that push what killed him, what was it killed him?" It wasn't so bad in daylight, such daylight as came through the slits of ports, and I could face the questions straight. I says, "If the fall did kill Wolff I'm not to blame, not having any thought to do him hurt." That was my answer.

'I lit the stove and had breakfast. I sat with my back to Wolff's bunk first, but soon I had to get up and sit on t' other side of the table to face it; afore I'd finished I was casting about for what I could do, and got the jack from the locker to put over him; I wanted to treat him respectful, you understand. By-and-by I took the glass and looked to see if the coastguard had read my signal; but I couldn't see the cliffs, let alone the coastguard station, for the rain-drive, so I put by the glass and went to clean the lantern and pump oil, working very slow for the sake of working. It was getting on for dark when I went up to the gallery to look at the weather. It was blowing hard as ever, and the rain come in driving squalls straight over the tower to the shore, so's the signal might be blown to threads before the coastguard read it. The sea was mountains high and the spray broke clear over the lantern. There was never a sign of the weather breaking, and I come down.

'When dark fell I took table and chair and bedding up to the lantern-room; for the smell

of oil was better'n the close feel in the room below. I didn't sleep; the scream of the gale was awful, and it come to me quite sudden, "If this lasts, what'll I do? I durstn't throw him overside—I durstn't do it—or I'll swing sure as sunrise. And yet if the sea don't go down to let a boat come off, what'll I do with him?" I got thinking of this, and thinking; and by-and-by I was sure it *was* me had killed Wolff, and it wasn't believable as I'd no thought to do him hurt, having threatened him with violence. I lay awake all night; and Wolff he comes and stoops over me to tell me quite civil again I daren't throw him over, and I was bound to swing. At dawn the sky was still black; the rain was off, but 'twas blowing great guns, and a worse sea I never saw anywhere; and as I looks I says, "If it blows itself out to-day, it'll be two days more before the sea goes down to let a boat within hail, let alone come alongside." What took me I can't tell, but when I thought that I went down to the living-room. Did y'e'ver go in a room where a body'd lain shut up for two nights and a day? No; then you won't understand the feel of it. I put the jack straight, and then I says, "Can I do anything for ye, mate?" and him not answering (as how should he?), I says to myself, "'Tisn't friendly to keep away when maybe he'll come to and want summut." So I sits down to smoke a pipe, waiting for him to come to. I forgot the lantern, and forgot to light the stove; and if I were hungry I didn't feel it. I just sat there watching until I fell asleep; sound sleep that I wanted, not having slep' these two nights. When I woke 'twas nigh dark. I lighted the stove and boiled some tea and ate a biscuit, and then my mind being on a even keel again I remembered the lantern, what had been burning all day, me having forgot to turn it out. I went up and trimmed and lighted it again; and while I worked I says, "You're a pretty fool to set there talking to a dead corpse, you are." But all the same I was powerful afraid of the night. There was just a gleam of light in the west when the sun sank, to promise a break in the weather, and that kep' me up; for I says time and again, "The day after to-morrow I'll be took off for certain." But there was two nights between, and I sweated for fear when I thought of it.

'Having slep' that day, I was wakeful, and the horrors took me, and I couldn't see nor hear nothing but Wolff's dead face and dead voice. I've been a sober man all my life—none can say I'm not—but when Wolff come troubling me I got up and I says, "I'll get drunk." There was brandy in the locker below; I hadn't touched the bottle, let alone tasted it, for six months, excep' when I got it to give Wolff, thinking he was stunned. I got the bottle, watching Wolff's bunk while I felt round for it. I brought it up to the lantern-room and drank steady; it did not need so much, me being sober by habit. But I got drunk; 'twas the reasonable thing to do.'

'It probably saved you from going out of your mind,' I said, for Abel paused and looked at me with appeal.

'That's just what the doctor says arter. He says, "The drink's cost many a man his reason; but it saved yours," he says; "it saved yours."

'And when were you taken off?' I asked. I did not want Abel to dwell longer on the story; it was too horrible.

'On the evening of the fifth day,' replied Abel. 'After five nights and five days the boat come off and took me and Wolff's body—that is, they towed it ashore lashed in blankets—they couldn't take it aboard. The doctor was awaitin' at the coastguard station; and he looks at me and orders me to bed at once. Two of the coast-guard stayed by me till the doctor come and give me sleeping-stuff. It was when I woke up the next night, having slep' thirty hours right off, that they told me I wasn't anyways to blame. It was heart trouble 'at killed him, they said—heart trouble; and they didn't have no business to put him on a light at all.'

'You never went back to the Carpenter's Rocks, I suppose?'

'Not to that nor any other light,' replied Abel. 'Them five nights and days made me a old man at six-and-twenty, and I came back to the fishing. That's all the story, sir.'

ADELSBERG AND ITS CAVE.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.

THE visitor to Venice of but ordinary energies, and with but a fair amount of time at his disposal, must reproach himself if he fails to cross the Adriatic, and take the railway from Trieste to Adelsberg. It is not often in the course of one's peregrinations about this little world that one comes well within reach of such a natural marvel as Adelsberg. The memory of it, once seen, is ineffaceable.

The best time of the year for the excursion is the summer. It is possible, however, at all times. The cave is always accessible, though it costs much more for the winter tourist to see it than for the summer traveller, who finds it then daily lit by electricity with as much method as that bestowed upon the lamps of Piccadilly after nightfall. Of course it is easy enough to traverse the Adriatic to Trieste—that place of olive oil made from cotton seed and much else of the kind. You go on board the steamer late one evening, and after a more or less comfortable night among the red velvet cushions of a spacious saloon, you are landed in Trieste at about six o'clock in the morning, just in time to see the markets in the full swing of activity.

I for my part made the trip in the spring, late in March, when the fruit-trees had got well into blossom, and the weather portents seemed fairly settled. But you never know in March and April what meteorological luck or ill-luck is in store for you. They are just as badly off in this respect at the head of the Adriatic as are we in Great Britain. In fact, though I left Venice after a day of sunshine and sweetness, when we set foot in Trieste a thorough 'bora' was blowing. If you do not know from experience what a 'bora' is, I think you may be congratulated. It was enough to look at the faces of the people who had to turn their noses in its direction. They were blue with cold, and if they were of the fair sex these had the greatest difficulty in the world to control their petticoats. The wind is a no-

torious periodical infliction. It rages from the north-east, getting well iced on the tops of the Carpathians *en route*, and picking up a whirlwind of limestone dust from the stony plateaus it sweeps across ere it gets a satisfactory outlet upon the open sea at Trieste. It is in short an abominable feature of this part of southern Austria.

The 'bora,' as much as anything else, made me hurry direct from the steamer to the railway station. I knew there would be no joy in Trieste while it lasted, and methought in the highlands of Adelsberg (some fifty miles inland) I might find it spent after a railway journey. But I was doomed to be disappointed. All along the line of the rails the 'bora' screeched and roared, and at the cave town it seemed to have made its headquarters. I could not help laughing to see how the wind caught the various passengers and railway officials at certain of the more exposed stations, such as Nabresina. It did not favour the stout at the expense of the lean. Not at all. But when its gusts were mightiest it took every man, woman, and child on the platform and swept them along irresistibly until they could get hold of something sustaining. Once or twice it looked as if there might be an accident. There were shrieks from the weaker victims. But they were evidently used to the curse in those parts of Austria, and matters duly composed themselves. The 'bora' tried what it could do in fair fight with our train. We had two engines on our side, and the rolling-stock was of the very ponderous kind. Once or twice, however, it made us stagger, and all down the valley of the Reka and up that of the Poik it had a perceptible effect upon us. It may have slackened our pace about twenty-five per cent.

The country between Trieste and Adelsberg is quite curious once the Adriatic coast is left. For bleakness and forbidding aridity it would be hard to match. We were ascending the whole way, with bare limestone hills on both sides, though not close to the line. And the uneven land between the railway and the hills was studded almost everywhere with masses of rock which completely put any plough at defiance. Only rarely were the heavy-browed houses of the district to be seen. Their dull red roofs went well with the blackness of the stormy skies and the dark clouds which pressed the hill-tops. Throughout the last twenty miles of the journey we were in a land of caverns and streams with long underground courses. A man might, I will not say enjoy, but certainly experience a very adventurous week or two among these wilds, with a capable guide and a few hundredweight of candles. The caves of the Reka are reputed, for example, to outdo those of Adelsberg in the magnificence of their stalactites and their extent. But they have not been taken in hand, civilised, and advertised as a world's wonder like those of the latter place. A fortune would have to be spent in rendering them even tolerably approachable. And even then they would not be dangerous rivals of Adelsberg until a village had grown up in their neighbourhood, with hotels and lodging-houses for visitors.

At length the train drew up in the Adelsberg station. A furious howl of the 'bora'

greeted us the moment we set foot on the platform, and the kindly phenomenon hustled us brutally while we walked the half-mile or so into the town. Dull and gloomy though the day was, and piercingly cold at this elevation of eighteen hundred feet above sea-level in the teeth of the freezing and merciless wind, something of Adelsberg's attractions, the grotto apart, was immediately made plain. The town lies in a basin of land girdled with hills. Its buildings are of the solid, massy-roofed kind so much in vogue in southern Germany. They suggest opulence as well as warmth. There is a large hotel in the outskirts, with a hydro-pathic establishment; and there is a castle on a cliff just within the town's precincts, a few hundred feet above the nether houses which once upon a time it so effectively controlled. The castle rock gives the name to the place. It was known of old as the Arisperch or Arensperch, though the modern name seems more explicitly to indicate it as the eagle's rock. The caverns burrow in the mountain mass beneath the castle. This imposing superstructure of mighty crags and masonry seems to give added majesty to the subterranean chambers of the great grotto.

Now I did not display my Anglo-Saxon energy by going at once to the cave. That were a needless and futile feat of impetuosity. It was the dead season. The caverns were wrapt in primeval gloom. A certain amount of notice is required to get them into visiting gear—and this notice I gave formally at the snug Croat inn into which I made my way, and where I ordered dinner. I forget exactly how thick were the walls of this inn; but they impressed me at once. You would have supposed they were part of a mediæval fortress. In truth, however, they were designed merely to make the best fight possible against the insidious and yet sufficiently overt attacks of such foes as the 'bora.' There was a good deal of snow in Adelsberg, and the streets, with the quaint mercantile tokens over the doors of the shops, were as empty as the caverns themselves.

And so I ate my soup and beefsteak in the large warm room of the inn, and afterwards smoked a cigar. And while I smoked, a burly citizen from Laybach came in, swathed with furs, and said he also desired to see the grotto and would be charmed to share with me in the expense of its illumination. His German was too good or too provincial for me, even as mine was too much of an exotic for him. But we managed to join in amicable execration of the weather over our coffee and cigars, and in due time we went arm in arm under domestic guidance in the direction of the cavern. The mutual support we derived from each other was really a most serviceable aid in our struggle with the gale.

A walk, or rather stagger, of ten minutes brought us to the iron gates of the cavern. These were thrown open with all the parade so dearly loved by the representatives of a Teutonic society, and we were respectively invited to sign our names in a book. The cavern, be it said, is managed by a committee who spend upon embellishing and maintaining it all the profits derived from it. The committee carries a very long corporate name, which it applies in

full to the notices and manifestoes with which it adorns the wall. All honour to it, however, for its good works. As the author of a diverting little local handbook observes: 'Whereas in other caverns you have to go carefully hand in hand, knee-deep in mud and in peril from falling water, here the paths are all levelled, made quite smooth, and even bespread with sand.' Moreover, there is a tram-line, so that ladies and others who shirk the exertion of a four-mile prowling under ground on foot may see most of the cavern's glories as much at their ease as if they were in a railway carriage.

At the outset we were not surrounded by sensational spectacles. We walked in a neat subterranean passage, gently rising, with the noise of running water gradually intensifying, as an orchestra of encouragement. But soon this corridor ended, and from a height of some sixty feet we looked down upon and across the great Cave of Neptune—the first of Adelsberg's grotto apartments. The cave is, roughly, a circle about a hundred and fifty feet in diameter, and with a vaulting some seventy feet high. The River Poik roars in its bed, and there are staircases here and there, and a stout stone bridge spanning the river. Staircases, bridge, and the various thoroughfares were all lit by scores of candles, and the sparkle of the lights shone fitfully in the turbid speeding stream. The roof of the cave is of the conventional stalactitic kind. Such, in dry detail, are the attributes of the Cave of Neptune, or, as it is more picturesquely called, the Cathedral Cave. From our lofty perch we gazed at the surprising scene, murmured some of those adjectives of delight and admiration with which the German language abounds, and then prepared to descend to the lower levels and cross the bridge. I think the finest thrill in Adelsberg is to be had on this bridge when the river is in full spate, as it was with us, and especially when the place is not searched in its every nook and corner by the electric light. The candles were a humble enough illuminant, but they left the imagination in strong possession of its powers; and it was impressive to look hither and thither in the echoing semi-darkness, and to see no forms except those of the prattling guide and the stout Laybach merchant, whose fat hands were for ever rising to give greater emphasis to his ejaculations of awe and amazement.

For those who like such things, there is a conspicuous memorial tablet in this cave telling in fulsome terms of the visit hither in 1816 of 'Francis the First, the just, the good, and the wise.' But it seems out of place. We are here in the realms of the gnomes. Human potentates are of no account in these depths, any more than in the air five or ten thousand feet above their kingdoms of earth.

Before passing to the next chamber, 'the name place,' a convenient slab of stalactite may be noticed. Five hundred years ago Austrian tourists scratched their initials here. Posterity has vastly increased the number of these tokens of the dead.

The Emperor Ferdinand's Grotto, which adjoins the huge vestibule of the cave, is more than half a mile long. It is not broad in proportion to its length, being really in places a

mere corridor; but it is interesting throughout. Our methodical cicerone never paused in the claims he made on our attention. The walls on either hand are wrought into an infinite variety of stalagmitic freaks. The names of a few of them will be as good as a minute description—the Butcher's Shop, the Elephant's Head, the Font, the Crinoline, the Opera Box, the Bacon Rind, the Handkerchief, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Nunnery, the Wax Candle, and so forth. The Butcher's Shop, for instance, is an odd agglomeration of pendent stalactites of many shapes, in which the gross fancy of the committee (we will assume) have seen legs of mutton, ribs of beef, and the like. Our guide held his light behind many of these diverting excrescences, and it was at least instructive to see the delicacy of their organisation and the beauty of their translucent framework.

The most remarkable part of the Emperor Ferdinand's Grotto is the Ballroom, a chamber broadened in its midst. This apartment is well named, for annually on Whitsunday a great dance is given here. As many as five thousand persons have polka'd and waltzed in it in a day. There is a suitable natural nook among stalactites for the musicians, and a pure spring of fresh water to aid in refreshing the dancers. Conceive the scene when this ballroom (one hundred feet by ninety, and forty-five feet high) is filled with lusty Croats and visitors of all kinds, and the whole is lighted as the committee well know how to light the caverns on particular occasions!

In 1856 conjecture and gunpowder extended the grotto from this last chamber into the Francis Joseph and Elizabeth Cave—also traversed by the tram-line. A tunnel nearly forty feet long opened up the Belvedere, an apartment about a hundred feet high, which lends itself excellently to illumination. A somewhat repellent chamber to the left is called Tartarus (echoing with the voices of the river far down its black depths), and on the right extends the most astounding of Adelsberg's features, the Calvary Cave.

Our guide made himself a little hoarse in trying to make me understand how many thousand years it took a common Adelsberg stalactite to grow a yard. He had in the Sword of Damocles a capital text for his dissertation. This is a pendent stalactite which, in 3000 A.D. or thereabouts (according to his theories), will have joined a neighbour gradually rising to it from the level. Hereabouts, too, my Laybach friend had a fit of ecstasy over the Laundry, an arrangement of dainty transparencies which the Tentonic or Slavonic fancy interprets as pocket-handkerchiefs, sheets, and more recondite objects known only to washerwomen.

The Calvary Grotto has left the strongest impression on my mind. It is adjacent to the Belvedere, and is reached by a staircase zigzagged up the limestone. The height of this chamber is one hundred and seventy-two feet, and a mass of rock springs from its midst to within fifty feet of the dome. When, not without some panting, we had reached the level of this grotto, and marked our shadows writ gigantic against the walls and the vaulting, and beheld also the radiant confusion all about us, it was impossible not to agree with our guide that this

is Adelsberg's glory. We were a mile and a half or more from the entrance, and it was as if we were on the site of some wrecked acropolis, with the pillars and pediments of down-fallen temples littering the ground. The stalactites here were of different colours—yellow, crimson, white, and lemon—and dazzling with diamond-like laminae. Milan Cathedral gives its name to one mass of pinnacled rock. Here, too, is the Curtain, though there is another curtain lower down much more enchanting. The latter is perhaps the finest stalactite in the caves. It has grown from the wall like a fungus; is nine feet long by three broad, and is little more than a quarter of an inch in thickness. A candle behind it shows its amber and roseate hues and crystalline beauty to perfection.

After the Calvary, our finite powers of admiration failed to hold out. The voluble guide continued his narratives most conscientiously, but I yawned, and the Laybach citizen complained of weariness in quite an irreverent manner. However, there was no help for it. We were far in the bowels of the earth, and we had perforce to grope back the two miles we had come.

In all, we were under ground three hours. I hailed the daylight and the 'bora' with comparative relief when we renewed acquaintance with them. They told us at the inn that the cavern committee have still most ambitious designs in the matter of the grotto. They believe it may be extended indefinitely, and they mean to continue blasting their way from chamber to chamber. But really, upon the whole, these gentlemen may be advised to be contented with Adelsberg as it is. No ordinary mortal will be able to endure with comfort the strain upon body and mind involved in more than four or five hours' life under ground, every minute of which is devoted, of necessity, to the contrivance of a new compliment to Dame Nature for her ingenuity and grace. As it was, after supper at the Crown, I recalled with a certain horror the number of times I had uttered the word 'Extraordinary!' during the afternoon. One may save time and effort by pronouncing Adelsberg's caverns, once and for all, sublime.

SONNET.

SOMETIMES amid the garish hours of day,
Bringing from golden hills the breath of morn,
Through fields of waving barley and ripe corn,
Stealing athwart the old and beaten way
My feet have trod, sweet vagrant memories stray,
Old loves, old dreams; not wan and travel-worn,
But fresh with beauty as of flowers new-born.
And in the passing moment that they stay,
Trembles my heart with all the olden grace
Of joy and hope; again my pulses leap,
A flash breaks through the dusky bars of sleep—
A glance, a whispered word, a touch, a face.
So in the crowded street comes back to me,
The scent of pines, the glimmer of the sea.

VIRNA WOODS.

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A TALE OF TWO MASSACRES.

To those who have lived in the East during the last twenty years, and have been in the way of hearing, there have come to knowledge not a few histories, some romantic and some tragic, arising out of the Bulgarian massacres and the incidents that succeeded them. It will be surprising if the next twenty years do not bring to light many other such stories in connection with the recent fearful massacres in Armenia. But the following tale, which is true in every particular except that all identifying names have been altered, is probably at present unique, and will not in the future be often matched in respect of the singular way in which it unites these two dark epochs of suffering.

July of 1877 saw the Shipka Pass, which the Turks had so stubbornly defended, in the hands of the invading Russians. After that, the next few moves for General Gourko were very easy. With a broken foe before him, retreating into a region devoid of fortresses, he had but to descend the steep southern slope of Stara Planina and possess himself of the rich region beneath it. Kazanluk with its rose-gardens was his, and so too was the lovely and fertile valley of the Tundja, stretching westwards towards that most beautifully situated of all Bulgarian towns—Kalofer, and eastwards towards Sliven and Yambol. But close at hand there was an important town, the capture of which would do much to give him the command of the vast plain of the Maritza. This was Stara Zagora (the Eski Zaghra of the Turks), to reach which he had only to cross the slight range called Karadja Dag, forming the southern slope of the Tundja valley, by the easy pass a short distance to the south-east of Kazanluk. Reserving the greater part of his force for the descent upon Philippopolis by way of Kalofer, General Gourko selected six thousand of the Bulgarian volunteers who had rendered him such signal aid in the fighting at Shipka, added to these two thousand men from his own Russian army, and at once struck for Stara

Zagora. Such Turkish troops as were there offered no resistance, but fell back to the south; and the victorious invaders seized their prize.

Then the Bulgarians fell before their great temptation. The scenes at Batak and the many other places where the horrors of the massacres had rent the heart of their nation, were still fresh before their eyes: the bursting wrath and hatred against the barbarous oppressors who had tried by such foul means to arrest their fight for liberty had not yet been appeased. And now they had a chance to take revenge. Few of the inhabitants of Stara Zagora had had time to escape; and the reputation of the Turks in that region already stank. The Bulgarians made them their victims. If they had stopped with the five hundred whom they killed in hot blood as soon as they had taken the town, the slaughter would have been bad enough; but they did worse. In the evening they looked about them, and found some fifty or sixty *tsigani* (gipsies) still left in their miserable huts on the outskirts of the town, and doubtless hanging on in hope of finding their turn for plundering. These wretches the Bulgarian bands compelled to dig a trench and to bring into it all the Turkish slain in the town; and then, when all was done, they killed the *tsigani* also, threw their bodies upon those of the Turks, and filled in the earth.

It was a horrible day's work, inexcusable even after all the dreadful provocation they had received; and bitterly and speedily they had to pay for it. How it was that General Gourko made the great mistake of the following days is a secret that lies with the Russians; but, at any rate, learning that Suleiman Pasha had concentrated a force at Kara-bunar, a place some little distance to the south of Stara Zagora, he moved upon him to dislodge him from his position. But the Turkish force was larger than General Gourko supposed—forty thousand strong. The Russians had speedily to retire; and when the Turks followed them and inflicted a defeat upon them in the outskirts of Stara Zagora, in the course of which they captured the standard

of the Bulgarian volunteers, the invaders had to retreat still farther to the north till they should be reinforced from Kazanluk. And now it was the turn of the Turks. They swore that in no place where there had stepped the foot of a Russian soldier would they leave alive any Bulgarian male over eight years of age; and that oath they not only kept to the letter in one of the most appalling episodes of the insurrection and war, but they killed many a woman and child too, and some who were not Bulgarians.

The village of Dérékeny was one of the places which they visited with sword and fire. When they came upon it, the people were in the act of taking to flight. One of the families had brought out their wagon; and as the mother with her infant baby and her little girl Ekaterina (five years old) were standing by the oxen, the father went into the house to collect a few necessaries. He came out just to meet a rush of Turks. Instantly they fell upon him; and at the feet of his wife and children he was cut to pieces. In moments like these, even a mother's love may not be able to preserve the mental balance against the suddenly added weight of fear and horror. It was so in this case. With a shriek of agony the murdered man's wife fled from the spot with her infant in her arms; and in the midst of that wild scene of pillage and lust and bloodshed little Ekaterina was left standing alone.

It may have been some hours later—it may have been after a day or two—a detachment of the officers of the British Red Cross Society, in going its rounds of mercy over this scene of carnage, found the little girl. She was far from being their only foundling; and in due time they, with their band of hapless waifs, followed over the plain that heterogeneous and forlorn caravan which represented the last of the lately flourishing town of Stara Zagora. Adrianople was their objective point; and there the Red Cross doctors, after all inquiries dictated by humanity and prudence, handed little Ekaterina into the care of a benevolent Armenian family.

For three or four years the poor Bulgarian orphan was kindly treated in her new home. Perforce she had to learn Armenian; and the little that she knew of her own language soon slipped away entirely from her through lack of use. Her adopted parents did not conceal from her that she was Bulgarian. They also told her, what they had learned from the Red Cross doctors, that she was from the village of Dérékeny, in the Stara Zagora district. But they were not able to tell her what her father's name was: and the poor child herself was unable to supply the information. But at the end of three or four years business reverses came upon her foster-father. He removed to Constantinople; and there, unable any longer to maintain the stranger child with his reduced income and higher cost of living, he passed her over to a trusted friend of his own nationality who lived in that great Asiatic quarter of Constantinople—Scutari.

Ekaterina was now about nine years old. Her new parents had a son, Hampartsoun, just a year her senior; and these two, so closely matched in age, grew up together with the happy freedom of brother and sister. The girl's story, however, was well known, and indeed was carefully preserved for her sake. When Hampartsoun had reached

the age of fifteen, his parents took him the pilgrimage to Jerusalem; and shortly after his return as a full-fledged *hadji* it became time to think of having him worthily betrothed. The father and mother discussed the matter with their friends; but so warm a place had Ekaterina by this time secured in their hearts that their final decision was that a better daughter-in-law than she could not be found. Accordingly, they betrothed their Hampartsoun to this Slavonic maiden of Armenian tongue; and when they reached the ages of seventeen and sixteen respectively, they were married amid much quiet rejoicing.

In 1892, four years after her marriage, there chanced to reach the ears of this young wife the news that there was a Bulgarian family living in their district in Scutari. She had no idea who they were or where they were from; but a strong desire began to take possession of her to try whether they could not help her to find out something about her relatives. She went to see them, and, speaking in Turkish, told them her story. Mr and Mrs Georgieff welcomed her as a sister; and the husband, whose work took him into nearly every town and village in Bulgaria, and who had already been successful in tracing the connections of several victims of the Bulgarian atrocities, began with zest the task of hunting up her friends. The case proved easier than most. Mr Georgieff wrote to the *kmet* (chief magistrate) of Dérékeny, minutely describing everything that might help to identification; and he on receipt of the letter at once called the villagers together, read them the communication he had received, and began to make inquiries. In a very short time it was elicited that Ekaterina's grandmother was there in the village, and with her the child, now a maiden of sixteen, that had been in her mother's arms that day when her father was killed; but her mother had married a second time, and was living in another village. The latter, however, on being communicated with, replied that if this was really her Ekaterina, the ends of her little fingers ought to be found to be bent. Examination was made, and this identifying proof was at once discovered.

Mr Georgieff now wrote to Ekaterina's friends, sending pictures of herself, her husband, and their three children, and enclosing as a gift for her mother a headkerchief which her husband and she had woven and embroidered. At the same time he said that their business was not prospering very well, that the actions of certain revolutionaries were causing the Armenians some anxiety, and that they would be glad to move into Bulgaria were it not that they were too poor to raise funds for the journey; he asked, therefore, whether the friends there could not help them to effect the removal. But the relatives in Bulgaria, though willing, were as poor as themselves, and replied that it was beyond their power to give help. And so each went on their own way for other four years, with only the occasional interchange of news through the Georgieffs.

By the summer of 1896 a fourth child had been born to Hampartsoun and Ekaterina; but one of their first three had died. This was the size of their family when that insane attack by Armenian revolutionaries on the Ottoman Bank gave the Turkish government its pretext for a massacre of the Armenians of Constantinople. In two days

and a half between six and seven thousand of them fell. Few were the Armenians who slept in their own homes on these fateful nights, and for many nights beyond. Nearly every foreigner in the city harboured his quota of refugees; and where no foreigner was at hand, Greeks and Bulgarians opened their houses, and let it be added in justice and with thankfulness, so also did not a few of the better sort of Turk.

As soon as the first horror died down, and before the government had fully made up its mind how to act, there was a great rush of Armenians for lands of safety—distant or near; and one or two of the embassies and consulates did noble work in assisting them to make their escape. But in a few days the government had matured its plans; and then followed weeks of persistent, implacable hunting of the afflicted people from house to house, filling the prisons with them, and extorting from them by threats and by promises all that they could wring both of information and of ransom.

Hampartsoun had not been in any way mixed up with the revolutionary plots; but he well understood that innocence would be no protection to him when the relentless agents reached his home. He must fly before they could lay hands on him; otherwise his fate must be months in prison with probable death at the end either by illness, or on the gibbet, or through treachery—and meanwhile, what of Ekaterina and the children? So once more he applied to his friend Mr Georgieff. Now this good man and some others (foreigners and natives) had become so zealous in the aiding of Armenians to escape that they had established a means of working which might be compared in a small way to the 'underground railway' of slavery times in America. The hatred and vigilance of the Turk could not cope with this society's determination to save; and scores of men were safely passed through its hands who might otherwise at least have been exposed to great privations and danger. In this way Hampartsoun and his family were landed beyond the reach of alarm; and, as may naturally be supposed, Bulgaria and the Stara Zagora village of Dérékeny were selected as their haven of refuge. It was not done without difficulty. Funds had to be raised by private appeals; passports and railway and steamer franks had to be applied and begged for; friends on various points on the route had to be communicated with who should interest themselves to help forward the little party in its ignorance of the language of the country. Once, through the failure to secure the passport in time, the villagers of Dérékeny, who had perhaps prematurely been communicated with, came in their wagons to the railway station at Nova Zagora to receive the refugees, but had to go back without them. But at last all difficulties were surmounted; and behold Hampartsoun, sent on by a friend in Nova Zagora in his own wagon, bringing Ekaterina and their children to the village of her birth—a stranger amongst her own kindred! The whole village came out *en fête* to receive them. Girls and youths had on their *prazdnik* attire, parents brought all their children to welcome back the lost one, the strains of the *gaida* testified to the joy of the people and to their readiness to celebrate the happy event

with a dance, and in front of all moved the *kmet* with his secretary to give to the proceedings the needed touch of formality and the air of official sanction. It was a joyful meeting. Some of the older villagers still retained their knowledge of Turkish, and so the awkwardness of dumb-show was happily avoided. The grateful immigrants were smilingly conducted to quarters that had been prepared for them by the commune, and were shown in triumph the heap of grain, the stack of firewood, and the various other provisions which thoughtful kindness had prompted the villagers to prepare, so that their first thoughts should not be as how they were to live.

Not many days later Hampartsoun wrote to tell his Bulgarian friend in Constantinople that the commune had passed over to his wife several acres of land as her share of her father's inheritance, eight hundred piastres as the rent of these acres during her years of absence, and a site in the village where they might rear a house. Thus all their needs were met and their future provided for, while the special industry with which they were acquainted—the weaving of kerchiefs for embroidery—promised to bring them in what might be looked upon as wealth.

And so Ekaterina, carried as a refugee child from the home where father and friends had been massacred, was driven back to it again—a happy wife and the joyful mother of children—by the massacre at Constantinople.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XX.

PHILIPOF and his companion hastened to obey the advice of the wounded Colya. Summoning the old woman who had admitted them into the house, they hastily bade her remain beside the couch of the sufferer; then Doonya cautiously opened the front door and looked well up and down the dark street. So far as could be seen, there was no one within sight or hearing, and the two conspirators—for Philipof felt like a conspirator, though he did not clearly understand whom or what he was conspiring against—together passed rapidly down the road.

'To Kirilof's first,' whispered Doonya; 'he is the doctor, you know. I fear he will not do much for poor Colya; but he must do his best. Down this street—Colya asked for a notary—he wishes to make his will, poor fellow; he has not much to leave! Stop, in here, quickly.' Doonya had suddenly grasped the arm of her companion and dragged him within the gateway of a large house; here she pushed him into the shadow of a portico within the yard, and waited a moment, finger to lip. 'Did you see?' she whispered presently.

'See what?' asked Philipof, whose heart was beating rapidly, though he did not know why; he had caught the agitation of his companion without knowing its cause.

'The bloodhounds,' Doonya whispered back. 'They are off on the trail already. In half-an-hour from now my home and Colya's also will be visited and turned topsy-turvy by them; probably others too. Now we can go on—come!' Cautiously the pair stepped past the sleeping figure of the *dvornik*, who sat snoring on his

bench at the front gate, wrapped, though it was now the middle of summer, in his sheepskin. This time Kirilof's house was safely reached.

It was nearly midnight by this time, but some sort of distinctive knock given by Doonya soon brought the doctor himself to the door, dressed in *deshabille* and evidently roused from his slumbers. He started violently to see Doonya accompanied by a stranger.

'Great Heaven, Doonya,' he cried—'instantly closing the door behind her after a hasty glance down the stairs—'what's the matter? Who is this? Has anything happened?'

'Much,' said Doonya; 'this is a good friend. Colya and I were seized by three of the blood-hounds as we came from you know where; this gentleman delivered us out of their hands, for which may God give him a heavenly kingdom. But Colya is dying, I fear; they stabbed him when they found they could not take him alive; he is now lying awaiting you at committee-room No. 4. Go at once. He wants a notary—take one with you.'

'A notary?' repeated the doctor. 'What for? Is it safe, Doonya? Has he funk'd? It is not a dying confession, is it?'

'Come, Kirilof, you should know poor Colya better than that,' said the girl. 'He is a fool, no doubt, but his heart is as true as steel; Colya is no coward. Take a notary with you; it is his dying wish.'

Kirilof shook his head dubiously, as though he did not altogether approve of the commission. Nevertheless he presently did as he was bidden, and repaired—as quickly as he could dress himself and summon the man of law, who likewise had to be awakened and dressed—to the house which Doonya had described as committee-room No. 4.

With the permission of the reader, we will now follow his movements, leaving Philipof and his companion for the present to think over the problem of where to find a safe place of concealment for Doonya, to which somewhat embarrassing undertaking Sasha was more or less committed by the parting injunctions of the wounded man.

Kirilof hastily made an examination of the student, whom he found undoubtedly sinking, though still full of the natural or assumed gaiety and verve which he habitually wore, and which were never thrown off even at the most serious moments.

'Well,' he said as Kirilof finished his examination; 'it's a pretty hole, isn't it? How long will you give me to make my will?'

Poor Colya struggled gamely to conceal the agony which the exertion of talking was causing him. Kirilof shook his head sympathetically.

'An hour or two, my friend,' he said; 'I fear I cannot promise you more than that. What is this foolery about your will? Do not vex yourself by talking—it will give you additional pain and also hasten your end.'

'Be quiet, Kirilof, and get the *vodka* out of the cupboard yonder; the committee will not grudge me a drop under the circumstances. Ah!' he continued, 'that's better; I'm not sure that I should not like to live on a bit for the sake of the *vodka*; however, the next existence is to be altogether in a spirit-world, isn't it? There's a comfort in that thought!—Now, Mr Notary, are

you there? Will the doctor's witness be sufficient, or must a third party be called in?'

'It would be as well to have another witness if your communication is to be of importance,' said the man of law.

'It is of the highest importance,' said Colya; 'you will be quite surprised to learn what exalted personages are to be associated with my last dying confession'—

'Colya,' said Kirilof hoarsely, 'what are you saying?' The doctor looked pale and haggard, and his hand trembled as he laid it upon the wounded man's arm. 'This gentleman is not a priest, he is a notary. If you have anything to confess'—Colya laughed quite merrily.

'Oh, it's all right,' he said, returning the surgeon's meaning look; 'mine is a mere personal statement; I am going to do a stroke of tardy justice.—Call in the gendarme, Mr Notary; he will do excellently well for a witness—particularly well!' The notary left the room in search of the night policeman. Kirilof sprang to Colya's bedside as soon as the door was closed.

'Colya,' he said, 'what devilry is this? I warn you solemnly that at the first suspicion of treachery in your confession I shall find means to open your wound; your vile life shall go out before your lips have compromised the party. It is a base end to die betraying those who have trusted you: think of Doonya—think of the great cause and all you have done for it already.'

'Oh Kirilof, what a delightful coward you are!' laughed the moribund man; 'upon my life, I am grateful to you for treating me to this last little bit of comedy! You are giving me a merry send-off! Cheer up, my friend; Doonya is all right; so is the cause; so are you, which is, I fancy, the main point of this heroic of yours! I shall give away none of my friends, don't fear; it isn't like me. I have a fad to do some one a good turn, that's all, and, in doing him this good turn, to safeguard Doonya at the same time; that's all, I swear it. So, for Heaven's sake, leave my bandages alone till I have done with the notary; let a man make a good end if he desires it. Come!'

Kirilof was but half-satisfied with this explanation; but further consultation was impossible, since at this moment the lawyer returned accompanied by a retiring and very grimy-looking policeman, who first crossed himself vehemently as his eyes fell upon the wounded man, and then expectorated with equal vehemence. It may be added that he kept up both actions steadily and in strict rotation during the whole time he was present in the chamber.

'Now, Mr Notary,' said Colya, 'are you ready? Pen and paper of the best, please; you will admit that the quality of the materials should be good when you hear me begin.'

'I am all ready,' said the notary, 'and I dare say my paper is good enough; it is the usual legal stuff.'

'Write then from my dictation: To His Imperial Majesty the Emperor Alexander II., Tsar of all the Russias, Poland, Finland, and all manner of other places and things which rightly belong to other people. Have you got that?'

The notary glanced at Kirilof in order to gather from the doctor's face some light as to whether he was to take down the words of this

dying lunatic. Kirilof, sitting on the couch beside Colya, gave a gesture of assent. After all, Colya might enjoy a dying bit of foolery, so long as it was harmless; means could be found, if necessary, to secure that his dictated nonsense went no farther than the stove door once he was dead! The gendarme continued his expectorations freely; you could judge of the workings of his mind by the loudness and frequency of those exercises.

Colya continued to recite:

'Your Majesty may recall a certain episode which occurred four years ago or more, close to the Summer Gardens, when your most Gracious and Christian Person was shot at and unfortunately missed by a person in the crowd. Two individuals were quickly arrested and imprisoned in the fortress. One of these was actually the author of the attempt; the other was the individual to whose action your Majesty owes its invaluable existence. One fired, while the other turned aside the bullet. With beautiful impartiality both were punished as criminals. Your Majesty will understand that, in my natural anger with the odious person who by pushing my arm interfered with my intentions with regard to your sacred person, I did not at that time take steps to justify my companion in misfortune; indeed I may say that I viewed with satisfaction your Majesty's treatment of your preserver, as welcome evidence of that splendid regard for justice which is the attribute of all kings, and of yourself especially. At the same time this person's presence in the fortress was convenient because your Majesty's officials were unwilling to hang both of us and too indolent to ascertain which of us could be hanged with propriety. Your Majesty will grieve to learn that I am now dying, stabbed by one of the members of your Majesty's secret-police force, while escorting an innocent lady through the streets of the city. Your Majesty will be glad to learn the name of your preserver, and as for me, I no longer possess any motive for concealing it, since in a few moments I shall pass out of the reach and jurisdiction of despotisms and autocracies. Accordingly, I hereby offer my affidavit that on my own initiative and for my own purposes, at the place and date afore-mentioned, I fired upon your Majesty, and that Alexander Philipof not only was innocent of connivance in the act, but actually turned aside the bullet, exactly as he affirmed at the time, thereby unfortunately preserving your Majesty's life; for which blunder he was very properly conveyed to prison and kept there for four years with other political offenders. There,' continued Colya, 'that ought to be a state document, to be preserved in the archives. Let me sign it, and you can read it over and witness it, all of you.'

The notary read over the ridiculous production, the last effort of foolishness and vanity of which poor foolish Colya should ever be guilty, and the paper was signed by all present and handed to the gendarme for delivery to the prefect at his district office. Then that official and the notary took their departure, and Kirilof remained to draw the curtain upon the tragedy-comedy of poor Colya's life. He did not have to wait long, for the little student soon sank after his supreme effort. He died perfectly happy, convinced that he was making an exemplary end,

and profoundly satisfied that his miserable failure of a life had been the brilliant career of a truly great and enlightened reformer.

CHAPTER XXI.

During the rapidly-moving events of the last hour or so, Philipof, though constantly in the society of his companion, whom he had heard addressed as Doonya, had had no leisure to observe her. When, however, Kirilof the surgeon left the pair in his apartment to consult as to their next move, Sasha had time to take a good look at the lady intrusted to his care, and was greatly struck with her appearance. Doonya, though not strictly beautiful, possessed a certain charm of expression which caused even those who knew her best to wonder, now and again, how it was that they had never noticed how extremely handsome she was. Her face was full of intelligence and sympathy; it was rather the face of a madonna than of a conspirator; and yet, judging from the circumstances under which he had met her and from the few words she had let fall, Philipof was obliged to conclude that a conspirator of some kind she was. Sasha had little sympathy with the conspiring order of minds; conspiracies were not at all in his line—quarrelling was; he was as combative as the most quarrelsome could desire; but he was averse to plots and intrigues, and he liked to conduct his quarrels in the open light of day. Philipof greatly approved of the appearance of his new friend, and for this reason was anxious to put himself right with her without delay. He therefore plunged 'into the middle of things' as soon as Kirilof had left the coast clear. 'My name is Philipof,' he said, 'and I was once an officer in a first-rate infantry regiment—the Okhotsk. I think the student whom you called Colya may have explained to you how it is that I am no longer attached to that corps; and this exhausts my personal history. Can you tell me anything about yourself? It is as well that I should know who and what you are, in order that I may be enabled to judge what to do with you, and whom to fear, and what hiding-places to avoid.'

Doonya gazed earnestly into his eyes for a moment, then she smiled and blushed a little. 'I see you are to be trusted,' she said, 'and therefore, though I am entirely ignorant of your views, I shall tell you who is the dangerous person you have been asked to protect. Since you found me in the society of Nicholas Smirnof, of whom you know something, you will not be surprised to learn that I am one of the Discontented.' Doonya paused, as though expecting some comment upon this revelation.

I guessed that much,' Philipof observed. 'Are you as—as extreme in your views as he?'

'You would say, if you were not too polite, "Are you as mad as poor Colya?" No, I do not lay claim to anything like the energy and enthusiasm of our poor student, though I belong to the same secret society of which he is also a member. Colya was always a trouble to the chiefs of his party, for he was ever in favour of extreme measures, and had no patience with those who advocated more peaceful methods of agitating for needed reforms. You will be surprised to hear that he was chosen for the work he endeavoured

but failed to do nearly five years ago, not so much because the Society wanted the Tsar out of the way, but because Colya was a trouble to the party, and the party therefore wanted *him* out of the way. It seems unkind to say so; but there are those of the brotherhood who will not be sorry to hear of to-night's catastrophe.' It was a relief to Philipof's mind to learn that Doonya was, as she expressed it, not so mad as the wounded Nicholas Smirnof.

'But how come you to meddle with politics; especially with so dangerous a school of politicians as this with which you appear to be connected?' he asked. 'I beg your pardon,' he added, seeing that his companion appeared distressed; 'I have no right to ask it; forgive me, and leave the question unanswered.'

'No; you have every right to an answer,' said Doonya, smiling; 'and I have no objection to confiding my secret to you, except that the story is to me somewhat painful. My mother was a very beautiful woman'—

'That I can very easily believe,' said Philipof politely.

'The daughter of a Moscow bourgeois. One day the late Tsar Nicholas—I think it was the year before he became Tsar—saw and noticed my mother as she entered the church of St Michael. The Tsarevitch was struck with her beauty, and sent an aide-de-camp to learn her name and address. Shortly after this a situation was offered to my mother in the palace; it was a respectable situation. I think it was that of superintendent of the table and bed linen, and the salary was high. My mother accepted it gladly, for trade was bad, and her old father would be thankful for the assistance she would now be enabled to offer him. But very soon my poor grandfather was suddenly overtaken by misfortune. The police invaded his premises and accused him of selling merchandise which was not what it pretended to be, and of passing false money, and other malpractices, of all of which he was entirely innocent. Grandfather went to Siberia, and died there, none of his relations ever seeing him again; and my mother, after a long and shameful course of persecution at the palace, escaped and married my father, an officer in a regiment of the line. The Tsar never forgave my mother, and my poor father suffered for it. He received neither favour nor justice in his profession, promotion never came his way—poverty and persecution did, and he died broken-hearted while I was a small child. Mother died also, and I was left to look after myself—very learned in the political opinions of the injured and oppressed, and an easy prey to those who sought recruits for the great army of the Discontented, of whom there are very many in poor, distracted Russia.'

'Thank you,' said Philipof; 'it is kind of you to open your heart in this way to a stranger. I belong to no secret society, though I too am one of the Discontented; but you need fear nothing from me; your story is perfectly safe in my keeping.'

'I knew that at first sight,' said Doonya, smiling; 'and, besides, having saved me to-night from I know not what horrors, you are entitled to know anything you care to know about me. I shall be in terrible danger from to-night, and if you are wise you will only help me to find some place of concealment and then leave me to my

fate, for I shall be a source of danger to my friends, and I would not have you come to any further harm because of us; you have already suffered enough for the brotherhood, thanks to poor Nicholas Smirnof.'

'Nay, I have nothing further to lose,' said Philipof somewhat bitterly; 'circumstances have stripped me of all that made life worth living. I am grateful to you for providing me with a new interest in life. Can you tell me of what or of whom you are in particular danger at present, and why you were attacked to-night?'

'There is something in the air; some enterprise being deliberated upon by the heads of our party; and the police, who have spies everywhere, have got wind of it. The more moderate of us are not consulted when there is talk of violence, though we are equally bound to all decisions arrived at in council. Nicholas, though not moderate, was not consulted either, because he was too impulsive, and was capable of ruining the best-laid plans by ill-timed individual action. There had been a general meeting this evening, after the conclusion of which all but the innermost circle were dismissed. Colya and I were walking home together when we were attacked. Had you not rescued me I should have been tortured in order to disclose the proceedings of the council. The police had wind of the council, but failed to find the rendezvous, or were unable to obtain admittance; therefore they pounced upon us in hopes to discover from us all the particulars of the plot they suspect. God knows,' Doonya ended, covering her face with her hands, 'what would have become of me if you had not rescued me, Gospodin Philipof. May God reward you for it. I believe in God, you see, and in many other things which our inner circle deny altogether.'

'Good again,' said Philipof; 'I am rejoiced that this is so. Now, I will tell you what I have in my mind. It appears to me that you would be far safer out of the country than in it, and'—

'Oh no, no, no!' interrupted Doonya; 'I could not leave Russia for many reasons! I must lie hid for a while; that is all that is necessary.'

'That is how we will begin at all events,' continued Philipof. 'Now it so happens that I can offer you a convenient sanctuary, if you are not too particular as to accommodation, where neither the police bloodhounds nor your inconvenient friends of the brotherhood are in the least likely to look for you—in the cabin of one of the grain barges, whose loadings and dischargings I superintend for an English firm of exporters. The skipper of one of these barges is a married man and a capital fellow; he shall give you a share of the cabin occupied by himself and his wife. He can sleep on top of the grain in the hold and she shall look after you. I shall represent you as my sister and as anxious for solitude and a little sea-air. You will not mind a trip or two to Cronstadt and back?'

Doonya clapped her hands with delight.

'Come!' she said; 'it is splendid. God bless you again, Gospodin Philipof—let us go at once; I am nervous to-night and upset. Do you know, when that policeman held me and I thought I should not escape, I saw in my mind a sight Vera Markova once showed me—she is one of our set—her back and shoulders all scored and torn with the knout; she had been through the examination

by scourge. That is what I might have suffered; but I should not have borne it as Vera did. I should have given every name and betrayed every secret. I could not bear it, Gospodin Philipof; let us go at once into safety!' Poor Doonya was white and trembling at the recollection of her escape; she had seized Philipof's hand convulsively, and was dragging him into the street.

It was past one o'clock and the town was deserted save for here and there the usual drunken brawlers and a few policemen and *isvoschiks* (droshka drivers). Philipof engaged one of these last and got himself driven to the grain wharfs, or rather to a point close to these. Here he alighted with Doonya, and, avoiding night watchmen and sleepy warehousemen, guided his companion through a maze of barges and lighters of every size and shape until the particular craft he sought was reached. The skipper was absent, probably on bacchanalian business, but his wife was fast asleep within the tiny cabin below. This lady, to her inexpressible astonishment, was awaked by the superintendent and requested to make room for a visitor; but with the unquestioning docility of the Russian peasant she obeyed at once and made no remarks, excepting an audible prayer which accompanied the invariable sign of the cross. It must be all right, she reflected, since authority, in the person of Mr Superintendent, ordained it. When Philipof placed a rouble in her hand and bade her take good care of the lady and say nothing about her presence to any single creature in the world if she valued her place, or her husband's, the good woman was more than ever convinced that everything was perfectly natural and in order.

Then Philipof bade his charge good-night and hastened homewards, feeling wonderfully content and happy—more so than he had felt for five years. Life seemed to have an object once more, and his grievances retired for once into the background.

DELAGOA BAY.

By JOHN GEDDIE.

A GLANCE at the map of South Africa reveals some of the reasons why Delagoa Bay is accounted a key of the political situation in that part of the world. In its immediate neighbourhood meet the territories of three out of the four civilised Powers that share among them the region lying south of the Zambesi. The fourth—Germany—would welcome nothing more gladly than a chance of planting itself in this strategic spot, and ousting from thence Briton, Boer, and Portuguese. For Delagoa Bay is the finest and most capacious harbour on the east coast of Africa. Its geographical position makes it the nearest point of access to the rich gold-bearing and farming lands of the Transvaal, and the natural outlet of its trade. With Pretoria, Lourenço Marques is already connected by a line of railway, which, for political, fiscal, and other reasons, is specially favoured by the government of the Transvaal State. Within the last few years the volume and value of its commerce have vastly increased. Quays, streets, and public buildings have started up out of the swamp, and strips of foreshore that but lately might have been had for an old song are bid for at ransom prices by competing syndicates.

It is, however, the future rather than the present facts of the trade of the Bay and port that engage the thoughts of statesmen and commercial speculators. Another generation will find it of immeasurably greater importance than it is to-day. It must grow up with the magnificent country on the tablelands behind it, and a large part of the traffic and intercourse with the British colony in Rhodesia, as well as with the South African Republic, is likely to pass through Delagoa Bay. This it is that explains why an obscure and unhealthy nook of Africa should twice have been the subject of international arbitrations, one of them still pending; why its history is to be found embalmed in many blue-books; why it should from time to time be made the subject of parliamentary discussion and of alarmist newspaper paragraphs, telling of the intrigues of this or that Power to secure it by seizure or purchase; why everybody understood the significance of the step when, at the crisis of the recent difficulties with the Transvaal, a British squadron was moved to Delagoa Bay.

It may be asked how it is that we were so long in discovering the importance of Delagoa Bay, and especially how it came about that, after having it partly in our hands, we should have let it go again. The same question might be put, and would elicit a still more unsatisfactory reply, concerning the other breaks in the continuity and stability of our South African Empire—as, for instance, the two Boer Republics lying north and south of the Vaal, both of which were for a time under the British flag. Rulers and governments, especially when they have to exercise control from so great a distance off as Downing Street, cannot be expected to look deeply into the future, or to fully appreciate all the bearings of local facts. South African progress, it must also be remembered, has been made not only at infinite trouble, but at enormous cost to the home country. There have been times—happily the present is not one of them—when, through native wars and Dutch worries, the Imperial Cabinet and the nation have been 'sick of South Africa.'

Who could have foretold, when her Majesty came to the throne, the immense significance which Delagoa Bay would attain before her reign was over? At that time settlement from the south had barely reached the Orange River; much of the Cape Colony was still unexplored desert—a wild game preserve as yet untouched by civilised man. The discontented Boers were only preparing for their 'trek' into the unknown regions beyond the Gariep; in Natal, Dingaan ruled with authority undisputed in the room of his father, Chaka; Moselikatse and his Matabele were the lords of the present Transvaal Republic; and a third Zulu power, the Gaza tribe, were in possession of the country adjoining Delagoa Bay. Portugal slept an enchanted sleep on the strip of East Africa which she claimed on the strength of discoveries made by her navigators nearly three centuries ago, and of dubious treaties with the 'Emperor of Monomotapa'—a sleep from which she has only lately been awakened by the activity of other Powers. Her authority in 1837 did not extend beyond the range of the guns of her military posts; and Lourenço Marques had a little before failed even to keep at bay the assegaits of the Zulus.

It is unnecessary to enter far into the question of the conflicting claims of Portugal and of Great Britain to the southern side of Delagoa Bay—the Portuguese right to the territory north of the Espiritu Santo (the name given to the estuary of the Umbelosi River), including the site of Lourenço Marques, was not disputed by us. The matter was judicially decided by Marshal MacMahon's award in 1875. Dr M'Call Theal is probably right in his opinion that both claims were weak, but that that of Portugal was the more skilfully presented. It rested chiefly on the ground of original discovery and of intermittent occupation; that of Britain on more recent annexation and concession by native tribes. The decision turned much on the interpretation to be given to an old treaty between Portugal and Great Britain, in which the territories of the former were defined as extending 'from Cape Delgado to the Bay of Lourenço Marques,' which Portugal contended must embrace the whole shores of that bay.

It was discovered in 1502 by Antonio da Campo, the commander of one of the vessels of Vasco da Gama's squadron, whose ship, becoming disabled, put in for shelter at this spacious inlet. From the natives, with whom the Portuguese began intercourse in characteristic fashion by kidnapping, a rumour seems to have been gathered of a great lake in the interior; and under the impression that the centre stream of Espiritu Santo estuary flowed from this imaginary reservoir, the discoverers bestowed on these waters the name of *Bahia da Lagoa*—the 'Bay of the Lake'—which in a modified form it still bears. One gathers from the narratives of the Portuguese voyagers that the native tribes dwelling between the Bay and the Cape Colony were very different, in their political and tribal divisions at least, from the Kaffir races that now occupy the region. A shipwrecked crew that traversed the distance nearly a hundred years later than Da Campo's time met with not a single tribe bearing the same name as that of any now existing; African dynasties are of still briefer duration than those of Europe.

Portugal's interest in the district was confined to trading in ivory, slaves, and gold-dust that even then came down in small quantities from the interior. No attempt was made to exercise control over the natives, nor do objections appear to have been raised when other nations—the Dutch and the British—began to visit the Bay. Thus when in 1721 an expedition from Holland, attracted by the report of gold-mines in the back country, landed and built a fort—on the site of what is now Lourenço Marques—they were left unmolested, and only abandoned it some years later on account of lack of trade and the unhealthiness of the spot. The Dutch, to whose rights in South Africa this country afterwards succeeded, were therefore the first to attempt the permanent occupation of Delagoa Bay; for hitherto Lourenço Marques—so called from a trader who visited the spot in 1545—had been but a place of call and barter for the ivory and slave merchants, and for an occasional official from Mozambique. It was not until 1781 that the Portuguese founded a station on the site of the old Dutch fort, and it was not until after the present reign began that the present town of Lourenço Marques took its rise.

By many claims and acts the Portuguese had asserted their right to this northern side of the Bay. But it was supposed that its southern shores, with the Bay islands, were still open to occupation; and they lay within the limits of the twenty-fifth degree of latitude, up to which in other directions the British authority established at the Cape was supposed to extend. The first indication given on the part of this country that the prospective value of Delagoa Bay was recognised was when, in 1822, the surveying expedition of Captain Owen entered it, and receiving from the Portuguese commandant of the fort the assurance that the natives were not subject to the Lisbon Government, proceeded to accept the cession by the chief Mazeta of the land lying along the Tembe River, and from Makasane of the country between the Maputa and the sea. At the same time, as Dr Theal observes, new names were affixed to localities; the estuary of the Espiritu Santo was dubbed English River; the Da Lagoa became the Dundas, which has in turn been driven out by the old Bantu name of the Umbelosi.

So far were the Portuguese from being in a position at this period to combat the British claims, that they were themselves, ten years later, driven from their fort by the warriors of the Gaza tribe. The question of the ownership of Delagoa Bay did not, indeed, excite any interest until the emigrant Dutch farmers had moved into the country between the Vaal and the Limpopo, with British authority following hard on the heels of these runaway subjects of the Crown, as the law then regarded them. They began eagerly looking out for some access to the sea that would make them finally independent of controlling hands and troublesome taxes, to seek escape from which they had fled into the wilderness. Natal was closed to them when it was made into a British colony. The next opening to sea and to the world was through Delagoa Bay; and in that direction the eyes of the Boers became more and more fixed. Other eyes, however, were turned towards the same quarter. As the Boers trekked northward into these dry and healthy uplands, whose mineral wealth was as yet unsuspected, British authority felt itself compelled to move after them, reluctantly and with many halts, and by interposing between them and the sea, prevent the introduction of new elements that disturbed our native policy and might jeopardise our hold on South Africa. It was in pursuance of this policy that Captain Bickford, of H.M.S. *Narcissus*, in 1861 raised the British flag on Inhak and Elephant Islands, and proclaimed the adjoining territory annexed to the colony of Natal.

Then, indeed, moved thereto partly by the Republic founded beyond the Vaal, whose independence had been recognised seven years before by the Sand River Convention, Portugal took measures to assert her rights, and in order to strengthen her case, took care to acquire whatever territorial claims had been already put forward in this quarter by the Boers. The outcome of it all was the arbitration, the effect of which has already been described; it gave to Portugal more territory, lying to the south of the Bay, than she had asked for.

Thus at an early stage of this interesting game of Empire we had apparently lost one of the

trump cards. Not entirely, however, for in the course of the negotiations that preceded the arbitration a pledge was obtained from Portugal that she would not part with the territory in dispute to any other Power until she had given Britain the refusal of the acquisition on the same terms—a pledge which, as we shall see, has since been confirmed, defined, and extended. But the fact is that in 1872, when arbitration was agreed upon, few people in Africa or in Europe dreamed that any other Power would attempt to gain a footing in the region between the Zambesi and the Cape. Enlightenment came when, some twelve or thirteen years later, Prince Bismarck, having completed the unification of Germany and rid himself of other home cares, began to look abroad in search of a colonial empire, and through his agents set the example of the 'scramble for Africa.'

In the meantime the Transvaal State had fallen into anarchy and bankruptcy; and Sir Theophilus Shepstone, with a few policemen at his back, had stepped across the frontier, and had annexed it to the British Crown. The military power of the Zulus had been encountered and broken in the coast country between Natal and Delagoa Bay. Again the winning cards were in our hands; but again they were given up or endangered. The Transvaal was surrendered to the insurgent Boers, under burden, however, of suzerain rights, since modified into an oversight of foreign policy. Zululand was parcelled out among thirteen native kinglets. And no sooner had we acted with this prodigal generosity than we found reason to repent our want of foresight. By a piece of diplomatic sharp practice, Germany cut out for herself a huge cantle of territory in South-west Africa. Economically worthless, it is politically of the nature of a thorn in our side. Its importance has been largely nullified by the fact that we still hold the one useful harbour on this coast, Walvis Bay, and that our advance in Bechuanaland, covering the trade-route to the north, has effectually cut off German territory from the Boer Republics.

Very different, however, was the situation on the eastern side, where only a comparatively narrow band of coast country interposed between the Transvaal and the Indian Ocean. From without and from within sedulous efforts were made to break through this barrier. Herr Lüderitz, the founder of Angra-Pequena, attempted to plant another German colony in St Lucia Bay, but was starved out. The Boers have broken the Convention line, and have eaten their way through a good part of Zululand towards the sea. The rest of it we have been in time to place definitely under our flag; and by agreement with Portugal we have joined up the territories of the two Powers, by parting Tongaland between them. The recent surrender of Swaziland to the Pretoria Government has brought it nearer than ever to Delagoa Bay; and the Transvaal had also the opportunity of acquiring 'way-leave' for an alternative line of railway and of access to the sea through British Tongaland to Kosi Bay, as a condition of joining a South African Customs Union.

But fate and circumstances have in the meantime diverted these schemes and made Lourenço Marques more than ever the 'vulnerable point'

of South-east Africa. Three main factors have yet to be mentioned—the railway, the gold discoveries of the Rand, and the extension of British settlement and authority throughout the region from the Limpopo to Lake Tanganyika. The Delagoa Bay railway question is a long and perplexed one; it is still under arbitration at Geneva, and the award has not yet been pronounced as to the amount of compensation due to the American and British projectors and investors, on account of the high-handed action of the Portuguese Government in seizing the line on the ground of the expiry of the contracted time for completion. But the railway itself is an important political as well as commercial fact. In carrying it through the Limpopo Range and the swamp-lands beneath, great engineering difficulties had to be overcome. On it, under its Boer-Hollander management, President Kruger relies as one of his mainstays against that inrush of British influence which has come along with the wealth drawn in almost fabulous quantity from the quartz-veins of the Rand. This last it is that feeds, and must continue to feed, the trade of Lourenço Marques and increase the importance of Delagoa Bay—that counteracts all the obstacles, in the shape of the pestilential climate, the surrounding swamp and forest, the tsetse fly, and, last but not least, the *vis inertiae* of Portuguese officialdom, that before stood in the way of its prosperity. It has stimulated also those stories, current on the Continent, of a project by which, under cover of an extension of the charter and powers of the Mozambique Company, the administrative and fiscal control of the Bay would be placed in the joint hands of the Transvaal Government and of a syndicate of Berlin capitalists—in breach of the spirit, at least, of the London Convention and of the Anglo-Portuguese treaty of June 1891, under which the right of pre-emption is extended to all the possessions of Portugal south of the Zambesi.

These documents are among the strong cards that are left us; and they need to be played with care and finesse as well as vigour. But besides and beyond, as assurance that no lever inserted at Delagoa Bay or elsewhere will break up our South African Empire, there is the northern spread of British settlement and enterprise, up to and beyond the Zambesi; there is our paramount power on the sea. Who holds the sea holds Delagoa Bay, and South Africa, 'in the hollow of his hand.'

'AND PARTY.'

By H. F. ABELL.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

JOHN THOMPSON, late (not very late) sergeant in Her Majesty's 200th, now coachman to Colonel Oxenden, also late of the 200th, now of the Grange, Puddleham, Hopshire, was hurrying towards Thrudown Hall, residence of Squire Lomax, two miles away, with a note. He was hurrying as fast as his northliness and the ice-bound roads would let him, partly to keep himself warm, and partly because it was past twelve o'clock mid-day, and upon his leaving the Grange gates a strident female voice had commanded him to be on no account late for the family meal at one.

John Thompson had passed the 'Golden Ball Inn'—a rare performance on his part—and had but a few hundred yards to go when he saw sauntering from the direction of Thrudown Hall a tall, good-looking man of five and forty or thereabouts, with whose figure he seemed to be familiar, and so he shifted the note from his left hand to his right, and prepared to give the military salute.

It is a small world, and as John Thompson got nearer, he said to himself:

'Blessed if it ain't!—But no, it can't be. But it is! Blessed if it ain't the black capting!'

The two figures met. Thompson, being in a hurry, would have passed on with a salute, but the other stopped him with a cheery

'Why, Thompson, who'd have thought of running across you here? What are you doing?'

'Coachman to Colonel Oxenden, sir,' replied the old sergeant at stiff attention.

'The deuce you are! Why, I didn't know he'd come to vegetate down here. Well, how do you like it? He was considered a hard one, wasn't he?'

'He kep' up the name of the regiment, sir,' replied the sergeant.

'Yes, yes, of course. Well now, tell me about yourself,' said the captain, crossing his leg, and leaning on his stick with the air of a man ready for a long chat.

'Perhaps you'll excuse me, sir,' replied the sergeant; 'I've a most particular note here to deliver at the 'all, sir. The mistress is took with the influenza, sir, and they can't come to the ball at Squire Lomax's to-morrow night.'

'Dear me! I'm sorry for that. I'm staying at the Hall for the ball, and I should have tried to meet the colonel again after so many years. Any answer to the note?'

'No, sir. Leastways I hadn't orders to wait for one. But I had oughter be getting on, sir, with your leave.'

'Give me the note. I'm going back to lunch now, and the squire shall have it directly he comes in.'

'You're very good, sir, thank you. It would save me a quarter of an hour.'

So the sergeant handed the note to the captain, saluted, and was making the right-about turn when the captain said:

'Oh, I say, Thompson, don't say you've seen me. I'll drop in and surprise the colonel—perhaps this afternoon.'

'Very well, sir. Good-morning, sir.'

And back he trotted, much relieved that he would be in time for dinner, and would thus stave off the emptying upon his head of the vials of Mrs Thompson's wrath, which nothing could excite more effectually than the spoiling of a dinner on account of unpunctuality.

But for John Lomax the world in this corner of Hopshire would have jogged very drowsily and uneventfully on its road. Although not ranking with, or pretending to rank with the established Hopshire families—that is, with people who, having lived on the soil for a few generations, regarded every more recent arrival as an intruder, he did a great deal more for his neighbourhood than did most of the elect for theirs. Blessed with an ample fortune, he made

the best use of it—contributed to the well-being and happiness of all around him. Hence, the two dances he gave during the winter season were affairs of a great deal more than local importance, and local caste was annually regulated by the fact of having been or not having been invited to them.

'Colonel and Mrs Oxenden and party' were, of course, regularly invited, and as the colonel and the squire and their respective ladies were, although living within two miles of each other, close friends, the regret of the Colonel and Mrs Oxenden at being disappointed at the last minute were as genuine as was that of the squire and Mrs Lomax that they could not come.

'The poor thing has evidently written the note from her sick-room,' remarked Mrs Lomax. 'She writes so beautifully as a rule, and this is not at all her hand. She hopes we will welcome her "party" a great friend of her husband's, Major Clifford.'

'Of course we will,' said the squire; 'we have none too many men as it is, and the colonel's friends are always good fellows.'

At eleven o'clock the next night the old-fashioned hall at the squire's, converted into a ballroom, presented a pleasant and brilliant scene. Everybody worth knowing for miles around was there, and the neighbourhood was famous for pretty girls, although it deplored, in common with most rural districts, a paucity of young men. The music was good, the floor was good, the room was well-lighted, all the company danced, and the old house, with its numberless nooks and corners, was admirably adapted for these between-dance *tête-à-têtes* which are the most fatal nets for susceptible youth.

Major Clifford had arrived early, and with that ease which the social side of military life so generally teaches, was very soon as much at home in this room full of people whom he had never seen in his life before as a native of the soil. Stay—there was one person with whom he seemed to be acquainted. This was a stylish woman of between thirty and forty, whose face, which had been beautiful, bore upon it that impress of hardness and indifference which so surely comes after a life in the world. When Clifford entered the room she saw him, and the colour fled from her cheeks in an instant. When he saw her, he raised his eyebrows and smiled, very slightly, but meaningly. He was afterwards introduced to Mrs Enderby, but he did not ask her for a dance nor did they meet again during the evening.

The principal object of his attention was the squire's youngest daughter, Hetty, a pretty girl of eighteen, who was evidently as much attracted by the quiet, well-bred talk and manner of the Grange representative as he was impressed by her charms.

That he had already danced with her three times, and the night was yet young, had not escaped the notice of Mrs Lomax, who at once with maternal solicitude, and with a wise maternal air of indifference, set to work to find out all about him. In this she signally failed, for she happened not to ask the only person in the room who really did know anything about him.

After Major Clifford's third waltz with Hetty Lomax he led her upstairs to one of the before-alluded-to alcoves, a dainty little corner, luxu-

riously cushioned, screened from the vulgar gaze by artfully-arranged greenery, and dimly lit by a quaint Japanese lantern.

'You must be very fond of this old house,' he said.

'I am ; I love it.' And indeed it is an interesting old place. I believe it is historical, but I am ashamed to say you must not examine me too closely as to this. At any rate it has a ghost.'

'Good ! One of the usual English country-house ghosts, I suppose,' said the major. 'Party in white, with a pale face, sad eyes, and all the rest of it ?'

'No. It is a man in a long cloak, and he haunts the landing outside mother's bedroom door.'

'How interesting !'

'Do you think so ? Well, I suppose there's too much of the New Woman in me to see the fascination of ghosts. But come and see his scene of action.'

So the major followed the girl up the broad staircase, at the top of which she turned to the left, and entered a dimly-lighted region of nooks and corners, and sharp turns, and steps which went up, and others which went down, until she stopped opposite a door which she opened, saying :

'This is mother's room.'

Major Clifford peeped respectfully into a large lofty room, no small portion of which was occupied by one of those funereal beds in which our ancestors loved to entomb themselves with such ceremony night after night. Otherwise the room was simply the perfectly-appointed sleeping-chamber of a refined Englishwoman.

'The ghost comes along the passage,' whispered the girl, with a mock air of awe and mystery, 'enters the room, walks up to the dressing-table in the bow-window, stands for a moment, and walks back.'

She looked at her companion as she spoke, and noting that his keen dark eyes were taking in every detail of the room, said :

'Yes ; it's awfully untidy. I see you're looking at it ; but we didn't finish dinner until late, and there was rather a rush to get ready for the dance.'

'I suppose the ghost is so far orthodox that he only pays these visits at certain fixed times ?' said the major.

'O dear, no !' replied the girl. 'He comes at all sorts of odd times. He's been seen here in broad daylight.'

'Have you ever seen him ?' asked the soldier.

'No—but—oh, I say, there's the music, and my partner will be hunting for me high and low !' exclaimed the girl.

So they hastened back to the dancing room.

'We are engaged for number fifteen, I think ?' said the major, as he resigned Hetty to her partner.

Hetty nodded and smiled, and they separated.

On the eve of number fifteen dance, more than half an hour later, Hetty said to Major Clifford :

'I'm going to ask you a favour.'

'Consider it as granted,' said the major, bowing.

'Do you mind sitting out this dance with me ? I want to ask you something.'

'With pleasure. Shall we go to our alcove ?'

'Yes.'

So they slipped away as soon as the dance was

fairly begun, and ascended the stair to the retreat under the leaves.

'You know Mrs Enderby, I think ?—I mean you have met her before this evening ?' said the girl when they were seated.

The major bowed affirmation.

'Who is she ?'

'Wife of Enderby of the P. W. D. He's on the frontier. I met them at Dundum three or four years ago. Why do you ask ?'

'Because she has been asking about you.'

'Well ?'

'And of course all I could say was that I had never met you before this evening, and that you were staying at Colonel Oxenden's.'

'Does she know the colonel ?'

'No. She is the "And Party" from the Towers at Crashford. That fat man and the florid woman are her introducers—Mr and Mrs Carnegie. We don't know much about them, but mother always asks them to one of our dances. Now, Major Clifford, don't answer this question unless you choose, and don't think me impertinent for asking it. Has she any particular reason to dislike you ?'

The major examined his shoes, and did not reply for a moment. Then he said :

'She ought not to have—certainly not. But why do you ask ?'

'Well, there was something in the tone of her inquiries about you, not in what she actually said, which made me wonder,' replied the girl.

'What did she say ?'

'She asked who you were—who "that cavalry-looking man" was, she put it, and how long you had lived in these parts, and what you were doing now that you had left the service.'

'Left the service ? Who told her I had left the service ? Well, anyhow, there's nothing very spiteful in all that.'

'No. But, as I said, women always judge what other women mean, not from the actual words they use, but from their way of saying them.'

'Well, Miss Lomax, so far from having a spite against me, Mrs Enderby ought to regard me as a very great benefactor, although I say so who should not.'

'Why—did you save her life, or what ?'

'No—I—er—saved something which is often more precious than life.'

'Will you explain, Major Clifford ?'

The major hesitated, as if balancing in his mind the course he should pursue. Then, with a sudden movement, he changed his leaning-forward posture for an erect position, and facing full his companion, said :

'Miss Lomax, as Mrs Enderby has given you the idea of being spiteful to me, and she may possibly say something spiteful about me, I must take you into my confidence. Now please understand that only upon your assurance that what I say shall go no further, I will tell you what I know about Mrs Enderby.'

The girl gave the required assurance.

'Mrs Enderby was very well known in India as a woman who thoroughly meant to enjoy life, and in India that is associated with a good deal that in England is considered fast. She preferred the society of men—of a certain style of men—to that of women, and was known as the Gay Grass Widow everywhere, and entered heart and

soul into their pursuits. Well, there was a good deal of high play at the station just then.'

'Card-play do you mean?'

The major nodded, and continued.

'Men can't be blamed for seeking excitement when they're exiled away in a bad climate, hundreds of miles from life; nor can women, when they keep within bounds, but Mrs Enderby went the pace. At any rate, she was always at the baccarat table, and she won so consistently that I watched her, and—I don't think I need say any more.'

'I'm afraid I'm very stupid,' said the girl. 'What then?'

'Well—she didn't play quite as ladies and gentlemen are usually supposed to play.'

'You don't mean to say that she cheated?'

'I do. But, Miss Lomax, please remember—she had her lesson. I spoke to her quietly about it. She renounced the cards, became another woman, and is, I believe, an excellent wife and a devoted mother. There! I'm sorry to tell such a story about a guest in your house, but in self-defence I must, for, of course, she can never forgive me for having found her out. Let us change the topic.'

After supper Hetty Lomax came up to Major Clifford and said:

'Mrs Enderby and her friends have gone. Their excuse was that being such a fearful night, they were afraid the roads would be blocked with snow if they stayed later.'

'I'm afraid, then, that you think my presence here has something to do with their departure?' said the major.

'Well, I dare say she was uncomfortable,' replied Hetty.

The major and Miss Lomax were not together until the last dances on the programme came. When they met for the final waltz, the major said:

'Strange that you should have spoken about that ghost, for, as I was taking Miss Lemarchant to a seat in the uppermost alcove, during supper, I saw something very like your friend going along the passage from the direction of Mrs Lomax's room, although, if you hadn't told me it was a man, I should have called it a woman.'

'Probably one of the maids,' said Hetty, 'transformed by your imagination into a ghost.'

After the dance the major took his leave, and Hetty Lomax heard with genuine regret that he was leaving Colonel Oxenden's the next day for Ireland, for, although nothing approaching flirtation even had passed between them, he had won her esteem by his unaffected, easy manliness, his interesting talk, and lastly, perhaps not leastly, his perfect dancing. And so, charged with numberless messages to Colonel Oxenden and his invalid wife, the major went out into the wild wintry night.

The party broke up soon after his departure, but the story of the evening was not quite complete.

Hetty Lomax could not get Mrs Enderby out of her mind, and, unaccountably, with her she associated the feminine 'ghost' seen by Major Clifford. Some impulse sent her flying up to her mother's room, whence she presently appeared, pale as death, and said to her mother, who was seated with her father discussing the dance:

'Mother, when you changed your dress after

dinner, did you leave your diamonds on the dressing-table?'

'Yes, dear—why?'

'Because they are gone!'

GARDENER AND POTTER.

WILLIAM MORRIS once described artists as men whose 'only idea of happy leisure was other work just as valuable to the world as their work-a-day work.' This same conception of 'happy leisure' must have been evolved by Firth of Kirkby Lonsdale, long years ago, for his spare time for the last ten years has been as fully occupied by beautiful and valuable work as his working hours.

Born at Thornhill near Dewsbury soon after Queen Victoria came to the throne, he was brought up as a gardener, and served in various situations in different places, among them Kirkby Lonsdale, to which place an offer of the situation of gardener to a resident brought him about ten years ago. Soon after he had settled down, the first evening art classes were instituted there, under the auspices of the Home Arts and Industries Association; and Firth, who had already been led by the born artist's longing for self-expression to try his hand at stone-carving, was one of the first to join the wood-carving class, where his long-hidden talent soon showed itself. However, as his work in the drawing and modelling classes, which he was obliged to attend, showed that his real gift lay rather in modelling with his hands than with the carver's tools, he and some others were set to decorate the clay pots and vases obtained by the promoters of the classes (Mr and Mrs Alfred Harris) from a neighbouring pottery. The students tried their hands at pot-making as well as decorating, and some of Firth's attempts proved so successful that they were fired.

The difficulties attendant on the transit of such delicate wares six miles to and fro were so great, owing to the many breakages and heavy expense, that the attempt was on the point of being given up in despair when the position was saved by Firth himself, who constructed a wheel and obtained leave from the gas company to fire his pottery in a disused retort at their works. With these appliances he worked on steadily for some time, attending the drawing-class regularly, and studying all the antique models and photographs of Greek, Pompeian, French, and German pottery so abundantly supplied to him by his patrons. Eventually, as his talent proved itself well worth encouraging, a suitable kiln was provided for him, and he began to glaze and colour his pottery, in both of which arts he has made great progress, some of his colouring being worthy of all praise. After the persevering and patient study of years, his work is now excellent; and when one realises that his appliances and kilns are still 'home-made,' and that he has had no professional training in the management of his materials, even greater credit is due to him for the good and artistic pottery he produces. All is not plain sailing in a potter's life. Many are the mishaps in firing, and often in the past the labour of weeks has been utterly destroyed in the kiln. Still these disappointments, so heart-

rending in their frequent occurrence in earlier days through his ignorance of technical difficulties, are gradually being surmounted by patience and increased skill, and it is hoped that they will by degrees become less frequent and disastrous.

Year by year specimens of his work have been exhibited at the annual exhibition of the Home Arts and Industries Association, where they have invariably gained awards and medals, the climax having been reached in 1895, when he carried off the association's much-coveted gold cross. They have also received many favourable notices at the numerous local exhibitions to which they have been sent during the last few years. One of his finest vases was presented to the Duchess of York on her marriage by a member of parliament, and the Princess of Wales and several other members of the Royal Family have specimens of his work bought by themselves at various times. The crowning triumph, however, which his skill has achieved came to him through the purchase of eight vases, adapted by him from classic forms, by the South Kensington Museum Science and Art Department, and the Schools of Art at Birmingham and Leicester, as models for their students.

Some years ago he ceased to garden for others, starting a small market-garden of his own, and dividing his time between it and the pottery. Within the last year, that also has been given up, the demand for his pots being so great that the due carrying out of orders requires all his time. As he has now three kilns and a good wheel, constructed for him by a young engineer, he is quite able to keep pace with the demand, and his business is rapidly becoming a financial success. A son, having developed a decided turn for the craft, has been taken into the workshop, and between them they produce a simple pottery which is steadily improving in design and quality.

Firth's success, though so entirely the reward of his own talent and painstaking energy, is in a large degree due to the help given him by the Home Arts and Industries Association's classes which he attended. Without the excellent tuition in modelling he gained there, and the ample supply of models so generously lent him, he could never have gained the knowledge essential to the development of his talent, or have become acquainted with the fine specimens of ancient art upon which his own work has been built up. He is no isolated instance of the value of the instruction provided by such classes. Throughout the kingdom there are craftsmen and craftsmen doing beautiful and valuable work, who owe the foundation of their success to the unwearied labour bestowed on instructing them in the elementary principles of design and of the special craft they have taken up, by men and women themselves the possessors and valuers of culture and knowledge. Many such are voluntarily spending their own leisure in thus sharing their knowledge with their poorer neighbours, the conditions of whose work necessarily prevent them from going far afield to acquire the training they need to enable them to make use of the talents they possess.

Gardeners, as a class, have much leisure during the winter months, and that some of them spend it wisely is well known. No more beautiful baskets are made in the world than some sent to

the first exhibition of the Scottish Home Industries at Aberdeen by a gardener at Broughty Ferry, and all over the northern kingdom gardeners' baskets made by themselves are excellent in form and quality. Professor Herkomer's drawing-room is adorned by an exquisite piece of modelled copper, the work of his gardener, and many possess prizes won for proficiency in wood-carving. In fact there is no class of men who have a better chance of developing artistic qualities if they choose to take it, their actual daily work bringing them into contact with Nature in all her beauty of form and colour, thus providing for them the very training which all artists regard as absolutely essential to their own success.

BRANDY-FARMING IN CHARENTE.

It was my first day at Cognac. I was sitting at a window in the Hôtel de France looking at the statue of Francis the First, which forms the centrepiece of the square, when I was startled by a rapid series of detonations which I took at first to be pistol-shots. Visions of promiscuous shooting of a kind common in Nevada flashed across me. I made cautiously for the door and looked out gingerly into the street. Then the source of the mysterious noises was revealed to me. It was nothing more formidable than a country farmer driving his long, narrow cart, with two tubs of brandy of his own distilling, to one of the big firms, and announcing his approach by a series of tremendous cracks from his long-lashed whip. The French peasantry, I may remark by the way, are inordinately fond of cracking their whips, and perform the feat with great dexterity; it is a harmless amusement which, though it startles the stranger, has no perceptible effect on the lean and patient horses, which look as if they would hardly do more than wink even at 'the crack of doom.' Perched beside the farmer on the cart was his wife. A picturesque though homely couple they were; both of them as brown as gypsies and dressed in their 'Sunday best'—he in his broad-brimmed, low-crowned beaver, his white shirt, flowered waistcoat, and sky-blue coat; she in her simple stuff gown, neat and trim as only a Frenchwoman can make herself, with the wonderful snow-white cap, the pride of the women of the Charente—a structure of towering height but flattened and squeezed at the sides till it looks like a half-collapsed fire-balloon.

Later in the day I made closer acquaintance with this worthy brandy-farmer, for I met him at the establishment of one of the big brandy-merchants to whom I had an introduction. He had just sold his brandy, and to judge by the smile of satisfaction on his shrewd, wrinkled, brown face, had got a good price for it. I tasted his brandy too—a perfectly colourless spirit, fiery and rough, but, I was told, of excellent quality, though it had, of course, to pass through various processes of refining and blending before it would be fit for consumption.

Perhaps it may be as well to state here that though a spirit called brandy is manufactured in many countries and of many different substances, *genuine* brandy is the product only of

the distillation of the grape. The finest and purest brandy in the world comes only from France, and from one particular department of France—Charente. Nay, I may be even more precise, and say from one particular district of that department, of which Cognac is the centre.

The brandy-merchants, whose names are famous over the world, have their establishments in Cognac, a little town of fifteen thousand inhabitants, nine hours' journey by rail from Paris. A quaint and picturesque old town it is, many parts of it of great antiquity; but even the modern portions have an antique appearance; for the stone used in building is white, and, being soft and porous, quickly absorbs the alcoholic fumes with which the air is impregnated, so that a new house will turn black outside within ten years of its erection. There are hard knots in the stone, however, which resist the chemical action of the vapours from the vast brandy-stores, containing millions and millions of gallons, and the consequence is that all the buildings in Cognac are of a piebald hue, which makes many of them look older than they really are, and gives a singular bizarre appearance to the town.

It is to be noted that very little distilling is done by any of the big houses in Cognac, such as the Martells, the Henesses, the Otard-Dupuys. They leave this process to the brandy-farmers, the vine-growers in the country around, each of whom distils the wine produced by his own vineyard, and sells the distilled spirit to the Cognac merchants, who by blending the various ages and qualities produce the brands which are known by their respective names in the market. The fact is, the distillation of such a fine spirit can neither be done on a large scale nor far from the place where the wine has been grown. And, besides, there is the inconvenience of carrying wines in bulk which yield only one-eighth of their volume in brandy.

The brandy-farmers of Charente are a distinct class. Every one of them, even if he own no more than a patch of six or seven acres, has his own still and manufactures his own spirit. Most of the stills which I saw were mere shanties of the most primitive type, like Highland bothies or the rude huts in which illicit 'potheen' used to be, and I dare say even now is, manufactured in some wild parts of Ireland. The apparatus is of the simplest kind—just a boiler, with receiver and the 'worm' or serpentine, a mere tube thrust into a big cylinder of cold water. There are usually two of these humble stills in operation, and wood is generally used as fuel. When the farmer commences making his brandy he continues working his stills day and night until he has converted all his wine into spirit. The brandy at this stage is perfectly colourless, and contains the whole of the essential oil, which has subsequently to be removed by a drastic process of filtration. This, however, the farmer leaves to the merchant to whom he brings his brandy for sale.

Many of these brandy-farmers are very wealthy. I was told of one worth £100,000, another £80,000, a third £60,000, and a considerable number with £30,000 and £20,000 apiece—sums which figure out magnificently in francs. But to look at them, you would never guess that they possess as many pence as they have pounds. For, however rich

they may be, they still retain the dress and style of peasants. They make no attempt to ape the manners and fashions of those above them. Each generation is content to live as its predecessor did—a frugal, hard-working life, with its occasional holidays and junketings, and the exercise of that thrift which is a French peasant's highest pleasure. The pair whom I have already described as driving together into Cognac to sell their brandy may be taken as a fair sample of the class in manners and customs.

Shrewd enough, as far as the making and keeping of money goes, the brandy-farmer of Charente is very simple in other matters. Of banks and all similar depositories he has a wholesome dread, and often resorts to queer devices for the security of his savings. I heard of one case in which three thousand francs in gold were found stowed away in an old cask, where they had been deposited by the farmer, who, forgetting that he had hidden the money there, had refilled the cask and sold it to one of the large merchants, whose men discovered the treasure-trove by the rattling of the coins when they had emptied the barrel. He believes in no investment except Government Rentes, and thinks twice before letting the hoarded gold pass from his hands even for so safe an investment as that.

The usual mode of culture adopted among the brandy-farmers is to alternate rows of vines with strips of cereals. There are no fences—no trim hedgerows such as skirt you right and left in an English landscape—nothing but the endless monotony of these alternate patches of vineyard and corn-crop.

The finest quality of brandy produced is the 'Fine Champagne' or 'Grande Champagne,' so called from a tract of land in the *arrondissement* which has from time immemorial been known as La Champagne. There is a common notion that the 'Champagne' brandy has something to do with champagne wine, but there is no connection whatever between the two, and the districts which produce them are hundreds of miles apart. The 'Fine Champagne' brandy is distilled from grapes grown on a peculiar soil, composed of very light earth, so light indeed on the surface that it looks like wood-ashes, and the substratum is invariably chalk. The second quality is called 'Petite Champagne,' and the third 'Premier Bois,' distilled from wine grown in the woodland districts. The inferior brandies are those of the Annis vineyards, which lie along the banks of the River Charente.

The grapes are of the white species, not much larger than currants, and the vines seldom bear fruit until four or five years from their planting. They are most vigorous from the age of fifteen to thirty. Many, however, bear well up to fifty and seventy, and some exceptional patriarchs are fruitful up to a hundred years.

But the vineyards of Charente have not been more fortunate than others in escaping the terrible ravages of the phylloxera. This terrible pest made its first appearance in the department in 1874, and for four years swept everything before it. In the first year, in the beginning of August, the vine-growers noticed with dismay that the vine-leaves began to turn yellow and droop; then the grape lost its juice and shrivelled instead of ripening, whilst the tendrils came away in

pieces. In the second year the plants budded slowly and languidly, giving very faint promise of a crop, and the grapes were few and sickly. In the third year things grew still worse, and in the fourth all traces of life vanished, the vines became mere blackened stumps, fit only for fire-wood. It seemed as if the trade which had made Cognac wealthy and famous were doomed to death. For the phylloxera defied all the efforts of science to check its inroads, and to this day I believe that the government reward of 300,000 francs for a perfect cure of the disease remains unclaimed. But the introduction of new and healthy vines from California has been attended with such success that the hopes of the brandy-farmers have revived, and they, in common with the merchants, to whom the largest share of the spoil falls, look forward to the return of the 'old Saturnian reign' when making brandy was only another name for coining money.

The genuine brandy of Cognac is undoubtedly the finest spirit that is distilled. It is also the most expensive. You cannot expect to get anything like pure French brandy for less than six shillings per bottle, and the best is, of course, beyond the means of any but millionaires. I tasted some brandy at Jarnac, a little town ten miles from Cognac, the cost price of which was thirty francs per bottle. It was the favourite brand of the late Emperor Napoleon III., and I suppose would fetch in England something like two guineas per bottle!

Whisky has largely superseded brandy among the upper and middle classes of Great Britain. In the days of worthy Bailie Nicol Jarvie and his father the deacon, 'a tass o' brandy' was the general specific for keeping cold from the stomach, and the 'Glasgow bodies' would have turned up their noses at the suggestion of whisky, which had no vogue among reputable Scottish toppers till the latter end of last century. But it is otherwise now; and though there are millions of gallons of the finest brandy stored in the cellars of the great merchants of Cognac and Jarnac, John Bull, once the best patron of the brandy-makers of Charente, can no longer be tempted to buy it lavishly, as in the good old days when Dr Johnson declared that 'he who aspires to be a hero must drink brandy.' We do not gauge our heroes now by their brandy-drinking powers, and the merchants of Cognac find their best customers to-day among the American millionaires and new-fledged colonial magnates who are eager to drink anything that is highly-priced.

HOW DUELS ARE FOUGHT.

To the practical present-day Englishman duelling appears an absurd and ridiculous custom. A challenge nowadays would be regarded as an invitation to murder, pure and simple, or as a piece of grotesque tomfoolery. For a gentleman 'to call out' an enemy would be equivalent to calling him a fool and acknowledging that the challenger himself was an idiot. Yet it is only just over fifty years since the custom died out in the United Kingdom.

Until 1843 no gentleman could afford to refuse a challenge; indeed, it required far more courage

to refuse a challenge than to accept one. In that year, however, a Colonel Fawcalt was killed in a duel by his brother-in-law, Lieutenant Munro, and this incident resulted in the prohibition of military duels, expulsion from the army being the penalty for infraction of this law. From that time duelling went out of fashion. The last duel actually fought in the United Kingdom was in 1851, when the Mayor of Sligo and a lawyer met. It is only in English-speaking countries that duelling is not still practised. In all other parts of the civilised world every gentleman is bound by the code of honour to avenge an insult by seeking to kill, and running the risk of being killed by, the offender.

It is in France where duels are most common, over four thousand 'meetings' taking place every year. Military men, journalists, and politicians form the larger proportion of the duellists, and to members of the last two professions fencing and shooting are as necessary a part of their education as military training is of the former.

In French duels there are two seconds, whose duty it is to arrange all the details of the contest. The challenged person has, of course, the choice of weapons. In a duel with swords one of the seconds is armed with a stout walking-stick with which to strike up the weapons in case of foul fighting or immediately one of the combatants is wounded, however slightly. A duel with pistols is a very different affair from ordinary firing when one has time to take aim. The antagonists stand twenty-five paces apart, their right sides facing each other—in order to present the least surface to their opponent's aim—with their pistols held by their sides. One of the seconds gives the word of command: 'Fire! One, two, three;' and the shot must be fired between 'one' and 'three.' As the words are spoken rapidly, often as fast as they can be uttered, it is impossible to do more than glance along the barrel before firing. The skill, however, of some duellists is remarkable. M. Clemenceau is the most accurate marksman in France, and some of his feats savour more of magic than skill. He challenged a journalist who had insulted him by saying that Clemenceau's character did not deserve recognition, and that he for one would not take off his hat to him in the street. Before the duel Clemenceau told his opponent, as he would not lift his hat to him, he would take it off for him with a bullet. Clemenceau did not quite succeed, but his bullet turned the hat half-way round the journalist's head—without removing it, however. On another occasion Clemenceau promised to cut off his opponent's ears if two shots were arranged. Though only one shot was exchanged, Clemenceau was as good as his word, and shot off one ear.

The code of honour lays down certain cases in which a gentleman can refuse a challenge without tarnishing his reputation. Very near relatives may refuse to attempt to murder each other, a debtor should not try to kill his creditor, and a

gentleman would not dream of fighting a notorious blackguard, for 'to give satisfaction' to such a person is obviously an abuse of terms. A celebrated duellist may also refuse to meet an ordinary person, though a challenge from a person of lower rank cannot be ignored by any but those who have established their reputation in several duels.

As a rule French duels are harmless. In some twelve hundred duels fought between civilians during the last twenty years, only a dozen combatants were killed; the same percentage were injured, while the remaining ninety-eight per cent. left the field of battle unscathed.

Among German students duels are common, but very rarely does one terminate fatally. The students live in lodgings, and the only bonds into which they enter with each other are those undertaken when they join a Corps or a *Burschenschaft*. Every member is obliged to submit to the code of honour, which directs the members when and how to resent injuries, real or fancied. The members of the *Burschenschaften* are not obliged to duel, and hence they are regarded with contempt by the members of the Corps. The members of the different duelling societies are distinguished by the colour of their caps. The cost to each member of belonging to a Corps is not less than £100 per annum.

Duels are fought when no provocation has been given. The *Ehrengericht*, or Court of Honour, decides that one is to be fought between two given members with the object of accustoming them to use their swords and to keep their hands well in. From the decision of the *Ehrengericht* there is no appeal, and a member refusing to obey is expelled from the Corps. Swords are the weapons in these duels, and despite the use of leather guards and padding, many flesh-wounds are inflicted, though serious results are rare. The students pride themselves on their scars and wounds, and in order to make them more prominent, they anoint them with beer.

Though forbidden by law and punishable by imprisonment in a fortress, duelling is very common among the officers of the German army. Until recently they have been bound by the military code of honour to accept challenges, though they were not allowed to fight a tradesman. In 1887 an officer was expelled from the army for refusing to accept a challenge. But the Emperor of Germany prohibited duelling a short time ago, and decreed that disputes should be settled by a Court of Honour.

In Austria the duel, though less common, is far more deadly than in France and Germany. Pistols are the usual weapons, and the antagonists are placed only a few paces from each other. With the sword, long and furious duels are also fought out. Both military men and civilians fight with great bitterness.

Russian duellists stand fifteen yards apart, and they are allowed to advance five paces at a given signal and fire at will. If both parties advance to the limit before firing, the distance between them is reduced to five yards. Should one fire and miss, the other is allowed to advance his five paces before returning fire. Sometimes one is mortally wounded before firing, but has still sufficient strength left to advance five yards, take steady aim, and shoot his opponent dead.

In the Baltic Provinces this sanguinary method

is replaced by one still more horrible. The combatants stand only three paces apart; the pistols are held pointing upwards, and at a given signal they are lowered and discharged. It would seem impossible to avoid killing one's man at such close quarters, but this is not the case. The duellists are both so anxious to get the first shot that both often miss, the sharp, downward movement of the arm causing the bullet to be buried in the ground or only wound the lower extremities. Sometimes four or five shots are exchanged without either party being injured.

Among the hot-blooded Italians and Spaniards duelling is a common every-day method of settling disputes. The sword is the usual weapon, though the stiletto is also frequently used. Sometimes, in order to insure the death of at least one of the combatants, they are tied foot to foot and fight it out with daggers.

A N O L D M A I D.

HER eyes like quiet pools are clear;
Her placid face is sweet and fair;
The frost of many a vanished year
Lies on her hair.

She has no memories of vows
Exchanged below an April moon,
Or whispered converse 'neath the boughs
Of rose-bright June.

She never planned her wedding gown—
This sweet old maiden true and good;
For her Life held no sacred crown
Of motherhood.

Yet to the shelter of her side
The little orphan children press;
'Tis known she mothers, far and wide,
The motherless.

The poor and suffering love her well—
Such ready sympathy she shows;
The sorrow-burdened freely tell
To her their woes.

For those who stumble, those who fall,
Her heart with gentlest ruth is stirred;
She has a kindly smile for all—
A cheering word.

With Fate she never wages strife;
'It must be right, since God knows best';
And so she lives her useful life,
Blessing and blest.

She strews the thorny paths with flowers;
She turns the darkness into day;
And, as we clasp her hand in ours,
We can but say:

'Dear friend, so rich in love and truth,
With large, warm heart, and steadfast mind,
'Twas well for some that in your youth
The men were blind.'

E. MATHESON.

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THE TOURIST IN THE LAND OF THE TSAR.

By FRED WHISHAW, Author of *Out of Doors in Tsarland*.

IN case any of my readers should contemplate taking a trip to St Petersburg, I propose to preface my remarks upon policemen and *isvoschicks* (cab-drivers) which are to supply the *leit-motif* for this paper, by giving a few practical hints for the encouragement and instruction of tourists. In the first place, then, let not those who would see Russia be deterred by any craven fears for their personal safety; nothing will happen to them. Russia is as safe for the ordinary, innocent tourist as any other country, and is more interesting than some. The traveller—unless he is indiscreet enough to photograph fortresses or practise pistol-shooting in the streets, or to indulge in any similar foolish enterprises—will come and go unquestioned, and there is no danger whatever of his being sent 'to a distant locality,' as Siberia is officially referred to. I have frequently been asked whether it is 'safe' to visit Russia. Most unquestionably it is safe for respectable, law-abiding people; as safe as England, and probably safer than France. Only let the traveller provide himself with a passport, and have it *visé* according to the legal requirements of the country he desires to visit, and no one will interfere with him in any way whatever. On the contrary, the Russian hotel-people will be very glad of his company, and will take care that he is made comfortable, and no one will suspect him of harbouring wicked designs, or wish to do him an injury. Why should they? Every traveller is not a Nihilist or a suspected one. The Russian police are very well aware whom it is necessary to watch, and who may be left in peace, and the timid tourist may rest assured that he runs a greater risk at home by reason of his own anarchist neighbours than he will in Russia on account of the Nihilists and Nihilism.

Therefore, fear nothing, timid tourist, but buy your ticket by land or sea—and away with you.

Seven or eight pounds will, I believe, buy you a return ticket by sea from Hull or London to St Petersburg direct, and six shillings and sixpence per diem will be added thereto for your food. By land twelve pounds will purchase a first-class single ticket and about eight or nine pounds will suffice for second-class, the journey occupying only two days and a half by land, or six by sea. Be provided with a passport, as aforesaid (your banker will get it for you), and travel with a quiet mind, for your friends will not have to bewail your disappearance in an easterly direction or to search for you 'Per inhospitalem Caucasum, vel quae loca fabulosus lambit Hydaspes!' but will greet you, restored to them at the expiration of your return ticket, safe and happy, and determined to repeat your visit at the earliest opportunity!

But let us suppose that you have been persuaded to undertake the journey, or that you have never experienced that mistrust which so many would-be visitors appear to entertain for the country of the Tsar and his people, and are arriving, a stranger and friendless, at the station in St Petersburg; your best course is now to look out for the commissionaire of one of the hotels, give him your luggage-ticket, and engage an *isvoschick* to take you to the hotel you have chosen. This may be either the Hotel Angleterre, which is a good one and not so expensive as the Demouth, or the Grand or the Europe or the France, though all these are also excellent. You will find a strange group of men congregated without the station door, dressed in long, shabby kaftans, which are a cross between a dressing-gown and an ulster, but favouring the dressing-gown; these are the *isvoschicks*, and the clamouring with which they assail your ears as you stand aghast and listen to their excited exclamations, is the expression of their desire to convey you to your destination. Stand not, now, upon the order of your going, but go at once; do not pause to select one, or you will be torn in pieces by the rest, or your clothes will, so great is the longing of each to receive your custom; jump into the nearest droshky and say 'Hotel Angleterre,' or hotel any-

thing else, and then—well, then sit tight and hold on, if you can! There is not much to hold on to, certainly; but grip what you can, the man's waistband if nothing else offers, or you are a lost man. If you survive that first drive and reach the hotel in safety you may be quite sure that you have passed through the most disturbing experience, physically speaking, which you are likely to be called on to endure upon this planet; earthquakes, in future, need cause you no alarm; upheavals shall not remove you; you may smile at the thought of a trifling railway collision; for the passing of an old droshky (and most of these vehicles are very old indeed, though it should in justice be mentioned that some little improvement in these dreadful vehicles has been noticeable of late years) over the cobbles and in and out of the unmended holes in the road is worse than all these things, and will cause the inexperienced tourist to jump about in his seat like a pea on a drum-head; and if—after one of his soarings into space—he happens to alight in the road (which is a hard road) instead of back in his seat or on the top of the *isvoschick's* head, and the latter drives away in ignorance of his departure, do not let him be surprised, for have I not warned him? But perhaps the tourist will ask—Why must the droshky be driven into the unmended holes? Why not skirt them? Have we not been informed that the roads are very wide? There must be plenty of room to pass by where there is no yawning abyss in the roadway!

Gentle reader, it is part of the game to visit each hole in succession; and as for the driver skirting them, he is not in a position to do anything of the sort, for he is fast asleep and the little animal between the shafts has your interests in hand from the first moment of your departure until that of your arrival at your destination. The *isvoschick* is on the box, certainly, but if he is not asleep he is sitting round in his place conversing affably with his fare. In your case he will sleep, of course, because he knows you are a newly-arrived Englishman and cannot entertain him with conversation. In any case, his share of the duty of driving you to the hotel begins and ends in his holding of the reins; the horse does all the rest, and you may trust him to do it fairly well on the whole; only you must leave to his judgment the matter of selecting the holes he prefers to drop you into on the way, and also how far he desires to run in order to reach your ultimate destination. As a rule, he will visit all the holes he can see, for he dearly enjoys the fun of himself avoiding an abyss, but deftly steering the right or left wheel of the droshky into it; and after all this is the poor creature's only relaxation from his really arduous and responsible duties. As to the distance to any particular point, that depends a good deal upon chance, for your horse will follow the droshky next in front of him, and if that happens to be journeying in a direction

diametrically opposite to your own, you are likely to be taken a good bit out of your way. But this need not discourage or disconcert you—there's no hurry in Russia; our word 'instantly' is translated by them into 'this hour,' which reflects with great accuracy the usual happy-go-lucky condition of the Russian mind. Nothing need be done under an hour, not even a drive of a couple of hundred yards. Your driver will wake up presently and look about him; then he will see that he has gone a little astray, and will scratch his head and pull the pony round, and grunt something and fall asleep again, and the horse will have another shot at reaching the desired destination by following a second droshky, and so on. You need not worry about it; keep an even mind and you will eventually arrive at the hotel, unless you are shot out into the road and run over by a *lihatch* before you have time to get out of his way. A *lihatch* is also an *isvoschick*, but of a very different class: he is paid about five times as much and goes more than five times as fast; he knows where he wants to get to, and never falls asleep, neither does he drive you in and out of the holes in the road; he is fairly clean and smart for a Russian, and his droshky is an infinitely superior article, for it is provided with springs which are not tied up with cord, and with a cushion which does not necessarily cause its occupier to revile that destiny which brought him into a planet wherein the cushions are stuffed with jagged bits of paving-stone and old iron. Well, well; *à la guerre, comme à la guerre*; if we go to Russia we must not be too particular as to being bumped about in droshkies; it is painful, no doubt, to be shot up skywards and to alight on the low bulwark of the droshky seat, but those who object to the driving had better walk—and there's an end of the matter. My advice to the tourist is to walk whenever he can. Our English bones are not adapted to Russian driving; they will not do at all; they are useful to us at home, and we risk too many of them in gaining an experience of the Russian droshky; therefore let us be content to wear out our boots and at the same time to preserve our bones for use when we return to England.

When you reach the hotel, give your passport to the proprietor or to the hall-porter; he will see that the authorities get it; for the police must enter you in their register, and will require to 'write you off' again before your departure. All this will give you no trouble and need cause you no alarm; for it is merely the regular working of the system. It is even a protection to the tourist, and not a danger, to be properly entered and pigeon-holed by the authorities; for he is then under the protection of the police and is recognised and treated by them as a respectable visitor, to be left alone in peace and allowed to depart in peace whenever he likes, *unless* he proves himself to be an enemy to the state. Should the stranger act in a manner to rouse the suspicions of the police—by which I mean the third section, or detective department, which is invisible and ubiquitous and knows everything, or nearly everything—he will rightly get himself into trouble; he will be watched and dogged, and,

when the official mind is made up as to his guilt, he will be pounced upon. Mistakes are rarely made by the Russian police, and when an arrest is effected, it may be assumed with considerable certainty that, whatever may be said or protested by the victim, there has been good reason.

All this is not in the least degree alarming for the ordinary traveller, who should surely feel that his innocence is his best protection in a country where the police department is so ably managed that his harmlessness is certain to be recognised just as quickly as his political guilt would be, if it existed.

Therefore, let the new arrival give up his passport and think no more of the police force, save and except to laugh at the dress and general appearance of the 'town-man,' or street constable, whom he will see here and there at the corners in his long kaftan and sword, and with his grim countenance set in an expression of implacable severity. These are not the real police of the country, though they belong to one section of that wonderful force. These are harmless, brainless peasants, set here and there to direct the traffic of the streets and see to the safety of the drunken men, who are as common, alas! in the metropolis of Holy Russia as are the drinking-shops, and these constitute an altogether disproportionate share of the buildings in each thoroughfare. The real police are the invisible gentlemen of the 'third section,' who are everywhere, unknown to one another and to the world in general—always watching, always gathering knowledge of their fellow-citizens, always (whatever may be said to the contrary) acting for the safety of the innocent, but always accumulating evidence for the ruin of the guilty. This dreaded section will never interfere with you, Mr Tourist, so long as you behave with your usual discretion; therefore give up your passport, as I have advised, and reclaim it a few days before your departure; and now, having reached your hotel and arranged with the state for your protection and safety, go into the dining-room and see what the Russian cooks can do for you in the way of dinner. If you will take my advice you will taste a selection of the following: *Fresh* caviare (the real article); fish-soup, or crawfish soup: either of these will cause you to reflect on the advisability of throwing all English interests and considerations to the winds, and of permanently taking up your abode in a country where such delicacies are to be obtained. Then let the tourist try the game of the country—a 'double snipe' if he can get it; or a young *riab-chik* (tree-partridge); the former of these will, if he be still in doubt after the fascinations of crawfish soup, certainly cause him to send at once for his wife and furniture, and he will never return to England, excepting for a day or two now and again, in order to beat up other Englishmen to come over and eat double-snipe in the country of his adoption. As to drinking, he may drink anything he likes excepting Neva water; he had better not do that if it has not previously been boiled, unless he wishes to see what it is like to be down with the finest imitation of Asiatic cholera to be had in all Europe. For the rest, all the best wine goes to Russia I am told. I am also told that *vodka*, the national spirit, is very nice. As to the wine, it appears to me that you can get it good enough any-

where if you choose to pay for it; and with regard to the *vodka*, I am delighted to think that there are those who like it; as for me, I quote the Latin grammar: '*Sunt qui non habeant est qui non curat habere!*'

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XXII.

WHEN Philipof returned to his lodgings after having deposited his new friend in sanctuary, he found that the police had already done him the honour of calling upon him for an explanation of his conduct of the evening. Doonya's 'blood-hounds' had, of course, recognised him, and these having reported his proceedings at the department, the authorities there quickly became anxious to learn why and how he came to be implicated in the affairs of the student and Doonya. Sasha found that his papers had been turned topsy-turvy, and his bed, cupboard, sofa, chairs, and everything he possessed ransacked for incriminating documents. All this did not alarm him in the very least, however, for two reasons. One was that he was by this time quite accustomed to the attentions of the police, having had a good deal to do with them during the past five years or so; and the other because he well knew that he possessed no incriminating documents whatever, and that, with the best intentions to convict him, the police must utterly fail if they relied upon documentary evidence.

They might, indeed, and probably would arrest him for the part he had played in assisting the revolutionists to escape; but he trusted to a plain recital of the truth to vindicate his behaviour. After all, he would point out, there was nothing to show that the assailants of Doonya and her companion were members of the police force—they wore no uniform—and any man would do his best to assist any woman whom he found being assaulted in the streets. So Philipof went to bed not only without alarming reflections as to what the morrow would bring forth, but actually feeling far happier than he had felt for years. His adventure had given him quite a zest for life.

When he awoke in the morning and reflected upon the events of the evening and night, Philipof was quite surprised to find how much he was looking forward to seeing Doonya again, and how his mind seemed to dwell on her appearance: the sweet expression of her eyes and the pretty way in which her fair hair grew over the forehead, and the calm, kindly intelligence that seemed to be the natural and permanent characteristic of her face. In spite of the lateness of the hour at which he had retired to rest, Philipof was up betimes, and had actually left his lodging for his post at the grain wharves half-an-hour or so before the usual time. He found barge No. 15, the little vessel within whose cabin Doonya lay concealed, being busily loaded with its cargo of wheat, and nearly ready to be towed away to Cronstadt, where the goods would be reshipped into the large English steamer which should carry them

to London or Hull for ultimate consumption at British breakfast-tables. Ivan the skipper, recovered from his devotions at the shrine of Bacchus, superintended the stowing away of the big sacks of grain brought on board by hand and shot into the hold one by one from the broad shoulders of the *kruishniks*. Philipof beckoned him up.

'Ivan,' he said, looking stern, 'you were drunk last night.'

'Exactly so, your Charitableness,' said Ivan, as though he were a school-child answering a question.

'You know what the penalty for drunkenness is, according to the rules of our employers?'

'Exactly so, your Charitableness,' said Ivan.

'What is it?'

'The sack, your Mercifulness.'

'Are you dissatisfied with your post, Ivan?'

'By no means, your Mercifulness; I am very well satisfied with it.'

'Then why have you behaved so as to lose it?'

Ivan scratched his head. Then he crossed himself. Then he went through the gesture of spitting on the ground.

'It was the will of Providence that I should get drunk yesterday,' he said; 'it was the names-day of my brother. My brother wished me to drink with him; how could I refuse? My brother was also drunk, very drunk. All the Sergeys were drunk yesterday; it was their holiday.'

'But you are not a Sergey; you are an Ivan!' observed Philipof.

'But the brother of a Sergey, your Mercifulness, and for that reason—for this once—I am hoping that your Charitableness will overlook'—

'See here, Ivan,' said Philipof; 'I have no right to overlook your fault. My duty is to report your conduct to the firm' (Ivan removed his cap and scratched his head, which was all over chaff and flour from the wheat), 'but I am going to betray my trust and forgive you this time on condition that the lady who is down below'—('I noticed there was a lady there,' said Ivan casually)—'remains undiscovered and unmolested. No one is to see her or to know she is there; do you understand, Ivan?'

'Why, bless you, Barin,' said Ivan, 'it is no affair of ours if you load the whole barge with ladies. Are we to tranship her at Cronstadt with the wheat?'

'Fool—no! She is to remain where she is until you return here. If I then find that she is safe, and that neither you nor your wife have allowed her presence to be known to any single creature, I shall say nothing about your drunkenness yesterday. The moment I learn that you have spoken of a lady being on board I report your fault, and out you go.'

'Have mercy, Barin! Is it likely that I should speak of it? Fear nothing, your Mercifulness; bring as many ladies as you like, no one shall disturb them here.'

Philipof, having settled with Ivan, interviewed the skipper's wife, to whom he repeated the conditions upon which Ivan's drunkenness was to be condoned. Avdotia declared that in any case the lady was perfectly safe with her; such a charming *bekruishnaya* would surely be safe anywhere. Doonya had been 'making the running,' appar-

ently, already. Then Philipof descended to the cabin, the merest den of a place, about five feet square, half-kitchen and half-sleeping hole, and here he found Doonya, radiant and happy in spite of the extreme discomfort of the accommodation, and full of smiling gratitude towards her preserver, as she insisted upon calling Philipof. She felt perfectly safe here, she said, and Avdotia was going out presently to buy her a few necessary clothes—she had a little money. Even the astute bloodhounds of the Third Section would never dream of looking for her here.

She would have to make a journey, Sasha explained, during the afternoon. The lighter would float down the river when loaded, and be tugged by a small steamer to Cronstadt.

'A sea voyage!' cried Doonya, clapping her hands. 'How delightful!' She could come up on deck at dusk and take the air. She would be at Cronstadt a few days and then be brought back to this place for a further cargo, Philipof continued, and if she felt safe here she would feel still more secure when in the open gulf between St Petersburg and Cronstadt and while in the harbour at the latter port. But she must never appear on deck excepting at dusk or by night.

All this Doonya delightedly promised to remember, and Philipof was more than ever pleased with his new friend, and thought he had rarely seen a prettier face than hers appeared this morning when relieved of the anxiety and agitation which had more or less disfigured it on the previous evening. Doonya looked ten years younger to-day.

The barge might be loaded and despatched at any moment, and as Philipof had other lighters to visit in his capacity of superintendent, he now bade Doonya farewell and *bon voyage*, adding that he hoped to see her safely back in a week, or at most a fortnight.

To his surprise, Doonya burst into tears, and, seizing his hand, covered it with kisses: he was 'her preserver, her hero,' she said, speaking but half-articulately; 'he had saved her from terrors she could not bear to think of, and now she was safe and he was still running risks for her sake—she could not let him go!'

Philipof soothed this demonstrative little Russian lady as well as he could, and took his departure, feeling a wonderful softness about the region of his heart, and quite a new, choky sensation at the throat. He went about his duties on winged feet, feeling absurdly elated and happy, and thinking a great deal more about Doonya and her delightful eyes and hair than of wheat and barges and other subjects which ought to have engaged his undivided attention.

When he returned to the place which barge No. 15 had lately occupied, he found the craft gone—a circumstance which for a moment he very irrationally regretted. The next instant, however, the feeling gave place to one of unbounded joy, for even as he stood and peered into the labyrinth of similar craft which crowded the river for a mile on either hand, hoping to catch sight of No. 15 in the distance, even though he would see nothing more romantic than its black hull, with perhaps old Ivan coiling a rope on deck, a couple of gendarmes strode up to the quay and politely requested him to follow them.

Philipof thanked God in his heart that this had

not happened an hour or two earlier. As it was, his arrest mattered nothing; but what if these men had arrived while he was in the cabin with Doonya, and had followed him down there?

(To be continued.)

IN QUEST OF MAHOGANY.

By ROWLAND W. CATER.

THE mahogany (*Swietenia Mahagoni*, L.) abounds in the forests on the Atlantic shore of Nicaragua, until lately known as the Mosquito Reservation; and the districts surrounding the Rivers Wawa and Wanks may be said to be the centre of the trade in this part of Central America; indeed, a large proportion of the timber sold in British markets as 'Honduras Mahogany' comes from the Mosquito forests.

During a visit to this coast in 1893, I took the opportunity to make myself acquainted with the methods of mahogany cutters, and accompanied a gang of these hard-working natives into the interior. The *cortadores*, as they are called, mostly Indians and Caribs, are often engaged by speculators, who advance them money and goods, the bare necessities of life, tools, &c. In return they contract to deliver a stated quantity of sound wood per annum, in *trozas* (pieces or logs) of a stipulated size, at a certain price. Whether the quantity of timber named in the contract is fixed too high intentionally I am unable to say, but it is a fact that the cutters seldom fulfil their obligations, and, in consequence, a balance of timber is generally due to the *patron*, who, however, is always ready to renew the contract on the same terms.

Much might be written about the waste of valuable timber, not mahogany, for which the methods of the *cortadores* are responsible. Whenever trees are felled, a track, wide enough for the hauling oxen, must be cut to the nearest river, thus destroying a vast number of saplings and trees of larger growth. But for this waste there is no apparent remedy. If light railways were introduced, tracks would have to be cut just the same. However, railways would be useful in tapping certain districts. At present the quantity of mahogany inaccessible, because too far from a navigable stream, is enormous.

About twenty miles from the mouth of the Wawa are some extensive sawmills, owned by Messrs Hoadley & Ingalls, pine merchants, of New York. These mills may be said to be the headquarters, on the Wawa, of the mahogany cutters, whose camps, generally twenty or twenty-five miles apart, are to be met with close to the river and its many branches far into the interior. The gangs number from ten to fifteen men, whose business it is to seek out, hew down, trim, haul, and float to the vessel's side, as many logs of mahogany as possible, for which they generally receive an annual salary, and a small commission upon every trunk in excess of a mutually agreed upon number.

After a brief stay at the manager's house, I left the sawmills on the 3d of October in a very large dugout manned by a gang of Caribs and Mosquito Indians, who were about to commence work. The felling is generally done in the dry season, that is, from October to May. Decidedly

primitive was the outfit of my companions. Each of the *cortadores* had a couple of axes, and their *machetes* to cut paths and defend themselves against wild beasts; one or two had also a pair of *espuelas* (climbing spurs). In addition, the boat carried chains and iron pins for fastening the logs together. A supply of provisions, *jicara* gourds, and a few garments in waterproof bags, completed the list of necessities. The oxen for hauling could not, of course, travel by water, nor would they be required immediately. It was understood that they would follow through the forest when a halting place had been chosen. After paddling some thirty miles, we camped on the bank of a branch stream running from the south.

Soon after sunrise next morning I left the camp in company of two Caribs, the *buscadores*, or seekers, both of whom spoke a little English. Honest fellows they were, of the negro type, and as merry as laborious. Each bore a *machete* and pair of *espuelas*. Entering the forest, they slashed out a path through the dense brushwood in the direction of some rising ground observed the previous day. At the first lofty tree, a cedar, they halted; and one of them, strapping on his climbing spurs, ascended to the topmost branches, whence he glanced in every direction. Descending in haste, he took off the *espuelas* and picked up his *machete*.

'It a' right, sah,' he exclaimed; 'big lot ober dere,' pointing in a direction at right angles to the path already cut. Both at once plunged into the undergrowth, the climber leading, and, except for unavoidable detours, guided me to a clump of mahoganies as straight as the bee flies.

In Nicaragua the *Swietenia Mahagoni* grows to a height of from seventy to a hundred feet; and its enormous dome of verdure, composed of small leaves in clusters of from five to ten, being generally of a much lighter hue than that of the other forest trees, the *buscadores* are able to distinguish it from a great distance.

On arriving, the Caribs cut their employers' mark on the bark of each tree. This done, the climber again took the lead, guiding us to another clump which he had perceived from the top of the cedar. These duly marked, we proceeded in quest of others through a forest mostly composed of tall cedars intermixed with palms, with here and there an arched doorway of natural creepers, chiefly convolvuli, leading into the undergrowth. Over our heads yellow fly-catchers perched, watching for insects; paroquets flew from bough to bough in couples; while from time to time a hollow tap-tap apprised us that the red-crested *carpintero* (woodpecker) had discovered an insect-infested branch or trunk.

Pushing on, we passed through a copse of calabash, or *jicara* trees (*Cucurbita lagenaria*), whose peculiar fruit is of the greatest utility. The gourds vary in size and shape, according to their age, some resembling a pineapple, others a large pumpkin, while others again are not unlike a huge bottle. The seeds of the *jicara* gourd are enclosed in a thin but hard shell, covered with a green pulp and outer skin. After six or eight hours' boiling, the pulp and seeds may be easily detached, when the shells will be found somewhat softened. Whilst they remain soft, the natives carve flowers, animals, and designs of various kinds upon them, and expose them to the sun to

dry and harden. The result is a great variety of handsome drinking-cups, bowls, bottles, saucers, and even spoons. Some of the designs are very beautiful, though the style of art is usually rather primitive. Throughout Nicaragua *jicaras* (drinking-cups) and *jacales* (bowls) are almost universally used instead of china, than which they cost less and last much longer.

Every Indian when travelling invariably carries his *jicara* gourd full of water or *aguardiente*, generally shaped like a bottle, and corked with an *hilote*, that is, an ear of maize from which the corn has been stripped. The *vagueros*, indeed, and all who ride much on horseback, would hardly know what to do without them. Drinking vessels of earthenware or glass would soon be shattered, whereas the gourds will bear the roughest usage and remain intact. It is the custom among the Indians to hang bits of rag on the *jicara* trees, or *Santa Cruz jicara*, as they term them, and to cross themselves when passing. Whether gratitude or superstition prompts them I am unable to say; probably the latter, grafted on some teaching of the priests; the rectangular branches bear a strong resemblance to the cross.

Some two hours before sunset we started back for our temporary camp, having discovered and marked between twenty and thirty mahoganies. Following the track cut in the early morning, we met the *cortadores*, who had felled and stripped the branches from a good number of the marked trees. As night was fast approaching, all returned to the camp together.

Next day, the *buscadores* having entered the forest in a new direction, I accompanied the cutters, who first hewed down the remaining trees previously marked, and then proceeded to choose routes and cut tracks to the river in readiness for the oxen. This was by far the most laborious part of the work, as will be evident when it is remembered that the huge logs would have to be hauled over the ground or on rollers, and that every hill, every bit of uneven land, would prove an almost impassable barrier. Some of the trunks were left to rot where they lay. The labour of removing them would have been too great, even if the task were possible.

Appropos of this, it is said there is a log lying near the south coast of Cuba which measures nine feet broad, six feet high, and twelve feet in length. Its weight has been estimated at eighteen tons, and it has been there many years. As it is too heavy to carry to a port, it is likely to remain until it rots. In 1823 a log of mahogany weighing seven tons was landed at Liverpool. It had then cost for freight and labour about £375. It was sold for £525, and in sawing it up into planks the purchaser expended £750 more. So that by the time it reached the hands of the cabinet-makers its cost had swelled to over £1100. But at that date prices for mahogany were fabulous.

In Nicaragua the largest trees are generally sound throughout, and the diametrical measurement of some of the trunks is almost incredible. Logs as at present imported into Great Britain and the United States run from one ton to four tons in weight, but as few steamship companies care to handle very heavy ones, big trees are generally cut into sections weighing from two to three tons.

The task of choosing and cutting roads to the river for the trees discovered and felled in two days occupied ten men the greater part of a week, by which time I had seen enough of mahogany cutting, especially as the almost incessant axe-strokes and clashing of boughs had frightened almost every living creature that might be called game, except the birds, to a safe distance. There was no sport to be had without a long tramp, which I was advised not to undertake alone, as I might encounter a hungry jaguar or puma. However, I stayed to see the oxen at work and the formation of the *almadía* or timber raft.

When a number of logs had been slowly and with great labour dragged to the camp, they were re-marked, numbered, and rolled into the river, where they were fastened together by means of the iron pins and chains, and of course moored fast to the bank.

It frequently happens that the pins are loosened by the constant strain of the current, and a log is wrenched free, and carried down stream at a tremendous speed. To prevent this, the captain of the camp visits the raft daily, with a barefoot *peon*, who mounts the raft, and with a heavy hammer drives the loose pins home. The term 'as easy as falling off a log' will be familiar to many. I think it must have originated at some timber camp, for I never realised how easy it was to fall off a log until I witnessed the performance of that Indian.

He was a tall fellow, lithe as a palm, and marvellously agile; indeed, the most active of the gang is invariably chosen for this dangerous work. Every log, almost without exception, began to revolve as soon as he sprang upon it, and used to the task as he evidently was, he had the greatest difficulty in keeping his footing. Not the least of the dangers were the alligators, which swarmed in the river, attracted by the offal thrown from the camp. They seemed to be aware of the Indian's peril too, for a number of them dived and swam under water in their oily manner to the logs, waiting underneath for the catastrophe which seemed certain.

The man did not fall, though once or twice the captain, a gigantic Carib, grew very excited, and shouted loudly in warning.

'He dead fo' sure, sah, if he drop,' he told me. 'De logs crush him to deat', an' de *aligador* eat him. No man climb on big log out of de water. It go round and round eb'ry time.'

And then he fell to shouting more warnings, for the current was very strong, and the logs, not yet fastened together securely for the voyage to the sea, were straining and tossing in an alarming manner.

It is usual, when the raft is considered big enough and the condition of the stream is favourable, to send a man in a boat to the mouth to warn the owner. The moorings are then cast off, and the timber entrusted to the current. I have seen several rafts on their way to the sea, stretching almost from bank to bank over two or three hundred yards of the river, and I did not envy the men whose duty it was to ride upon the timber throughout its voyage, to free it in case of entanglement, and prevent it from grounding on any of the numerous jutting sandbanks. As a rule they sit astride a log, never relaxing their vigilance for a moment, or their legs would cer-

tainly be crushed between the great trunks as they swing from one position to another. In many places the trees on either bank dip their branches into the stream. The raft races along, and the men in charge have to hold on for dear life lest they should be swept off into the water. Indeed, accidents, often fatal, are of frequent occurrence.

Not less perilous is the task of the 'slingers,' men who wait at the river's mouth, fix grappling irons to the raft, and make it fast to the bank in readiness for the trading vessel. The mass of logs descends the river at a great pace, for a time is usually chosen when the stream is in flood, so that the 'slingers,' each in his canoe, have to judge very accurately both the course and the speed. A collision means almost certain death, for the fragile canoe could scarcely escape being dashed to pieces, and the man would be thrown into the water, a prey for the legion of sharks which infest the mouths of all rivers running into the Caribbean Sea.

I remained with the *cortadores* rather more than a fortnight, then, as no boat could be spared, I set out by land for the sawmills, or rather for the village of Yulu, the first stage, which I had intended to visit if possible.

My guide was the wildest looking Indian I ever beheld. His name was Manuel. Emaciated and ragged, he turned up at the camp one day, where his fellow-countrymen gave him as much food as he could eat, treating him with the greatest respect, indeed. The Carib captain, who assured me that he would guide me safely, omitted to say that the man was mad. I had to find that out for myself. At Yulu I learned his history. Manuel had not always been a harmless lunatic. Not so long before he was one of the happiest Indians in Nicaragua, with a well-cultivated *hacienda* of his own, and as pretty a wife and children as one would wish to see. It is rather a commonplace story—in Nicaragua. A *mestizo*, one of the ruling race, took a fancy to Manuel's wife. She refused to leave her husband. For that reason he killed her and the children too. The *alcalde* might have laid hands on the murderer, but he did not; so poor Manuel's friends shot him. The *peon* went mad, which was the fate of hundreds, perhaps thousands, in the early days of Spanish rule.

He led me a most extraordinary wild-geese chase. Our proper route was almost due east, but I think Manuel tried every cardinal point of the compass in turn. We eventually reached Yulu, by which time I was almost as ragged as my guide, and desperately hungry. Except for a little fruit, found by the way, I had eaten scarcely anything for three days.

Yulu is a village of about five hundred inhabitants, Mosquito Indians of the pure type. It comprises about one hundred and fifty huts, built of bamboo, tied together with strips of raw hide and dried creepers, and roofed with grass and palm-leaves. I think it must have been Sunday when I arrived, but I am not quite sure, as I had lost count. Anyway, a religious service was being held in the house of Pastor Smith, a Jamaica negro attached to the Moravian Mission, to whom I luckily had a letter of introduction. The Indian congregation was just leaving when I reached the black, but estimable, clergyman's

residence, so that I had an excellent opportunity of studying their lithe and flexible forms and flat features.

Mr Smith met me at the door. His mouth and eyes opened their widest, which was not surprising, for I doubt if a white man half so disreputable in appearance had ever been seen in those parts.

'Sah, sah!' he exclaimed, 'I dink you gone an lose yourself in de bush. Whar you come from?'

I explained and brought out the letter. I do not know how my friend the manager of the sawmills had described me, but the perusal had a remarkable effect upon Mr Smith. Addressing me as 'Yer Honour de Consul ob Her Britannic Majesty,' he begged me to make myself at home in his humble abode, and bustling about and shouting to the members of his family, he speedily set a square meal before myself and guide.

As I was wet through, and aching all over with a touch of fever, I ventured to ask him if he had any spirit in the house. Sadly he shook his head.

'No, sah. On'y tea, sah. De Missionary Board prohibit our consumin' de stronger drenk, sah.'

However, half-an-hour afterwards, when Her Britannic Majesty's supposed consul had gone to bed, he knocked at the door, and when I bade him enter, came in on tiptoe, with a very guilty look on his black face, and a bottle of 'Yellowstone' whisky under his arm.

'May de Lord forgive his humble servant,' he murmured gravely, as he half-filled a small *jicara* with the spirit.

I tossed it off, and ceased to shiver. May the Lord direct me to the house of another good Samaritan like that honest negro pastor when next I am lost in the woods!

Feeling quite well next morning, I accompanied Mr Smith and one of his flock into the forest. The Indian had a gun, and we had not proceeded far before he knocked over a *guatuso*, a kind of rabbit, reddish brown in colour. The path, kept in order by the Indians, was lined with bananas and plantains, with here and there a silk-cotton tree or a cedar. Returning, the Indian shot another *guatuso*, and the two made an excellent stew, not unlike jugged hare. Next day the pastor himself guided me to the sawmills, where I took leave of him with many thanks.

By the kindness of Mr Spellman, the coast manager for a Boston firm engaged in the mahogany trade, I was enabled to embark on a small steamer, where I remained while she made several voyages to and from a larger vessel waiting out at sea for her cargo. On board I picked up a good deal of information concerning the mahogany business, and witnessed the process of shipping the logs, which contain from six hundred to twelve hundred superficial feet of timber, and sell, when landed, at from fivepence to tenpence per foot. The price, however, varies according to the condition of the wood, and whilst some sound logs of exceedingly beautiful grain or 'curl' have been sold for as much as seven shillings per foot, others, which arrive with the ends split or damaged, either from too long immersion in stagnant water, or by accident, may only realise threepence per foot. The value depends entirely

on the condition and the grain, and every shipment, no matter whence it comes, invariably contains many qualities.

I was on board the steamer *Yulu*, named after the Mosquito village in the care of the good Pastor Smith, when a raft of mahogany, collected at the first camp above the sawmills, was set free. At the river's mouth I witnessed the process of securing it until the *Yulu* could take it in tow and convey it to the sea-going vessel. On its arrival, a large-toothed grappling iron was attached to each log; an Indian, sitting astride, and balancing himself with the greatest difficulty, then wrenched out the iron pin, so releasing the log from its fellows, when the steam-winch lifted it up, and deposited it in the vessel's hold. One log, weighing about three tons, fell from the grappling iron into the water. Instantly an Indian swam to it with a rope between his teeth, and heedless of the sharks, which swarmed round the steamer, slipped a noose over it. It was a daring action. I believe that a white man would have been snapped up immediately, but I have seen many a black risk his life in a similar manner, and escape scot-free. Why this is so I am unable to explain.

The vessel was bound for Bluefields. I took the opportunity to accompany her.

'AND PARTY.'

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

'GONE! My diamonds gone!' exclaimed Mrs Lomax when Hetty had made her announcement. 'Impossible! who could have got in to steal them? People have been passing up and down the stairs and about the passages the whole evening. Harriet must have put them away.'

'Harriet has never left the supper-room the whole evening, mother,' said Hetty. 'Besides, you know she has strict orders never to touch your jewellery.'

'I can't believe it!' cried the distracted Mrs Lomax; 'they must be somewhere about. Oh! my beautiful diamonds which you gave me when we were married, John! If they are gone, I will never wear diamonds again.' And she burst into hysterical sobs and cries.

They went upstairs, and sought high and low. The servants were called up and questioned: so were the hired waiters, and the cloak-room man. All in vain. The diamonds were not to be found, and nobody could throw a ray of light upon the fact of their disappearance.

What was to be done? It was nearly four o'clock in the morning. The snow was lying in heavy drifts all about the house, and was still falling, so that no traces of footsteps could be utilised. Useless to telegraph, even if a telegraph-office could be found open, and the only train for anywhere at this time of morning—the up London mail—had left Crashford station an hour previously.

Hetty Lomax had given her word to Major Clifford that she would not repeat what he had told her about Mrs Enderby, but, putting two and two together—the fact that Mrs Enderby was already branded as a thief, that she had left the house suddenly and at an abnormally early hour, and the coincidence that this very night Major

Clifford should have seen a female figure in the neighbourhood of her mother's room, created such a feeling of suspicion in the girl's mind that she felt absolved from her promise, and hinted her opinion. Her father and mother of course laughed at it, but Hetty persisted, and in reply to their questions upon what grounds she suspected a lady who had been brought by such well-known people as the Carnegies, said:

'Because she has a past—and I know it.'

'But, my dear girl,' said her father, 'even if we grant that Mrs Enderby is quite capable of committing such an act, and I am very far from conceding it, is it at all likely that she would choose such an occasion for committing it? What possible opportunity could a lady, very much in request for her dancing and her liveliness generally, have for getting unnoticed into a bedroom?'

'The very fact of its unlikelihood would protect her,' replied Hetty. 'And as for her opportunity—well, I'm not a practical thief, but I would soon find an opportunity for doing what I wanted to if such diamonds as mother's were my object.'

Hetty clung to her opinion, but the problem now vexing her was how to act upon it. To drive over to the Towers and have a private interview with Mrs Enderby was the only course open, but she had no proof that Mrs Enderby was the thief, and she felt pretty sure that the woman who could commit so barefaced an act would be quite ready to assert her innocence without betraying an incriminating sign. Moreover, she *might* be mistaken, and the consequences of a mistake in so serious a matter as the accusing of a well-known society lady with theft were too terrible to be thought of. So she kept her own counsel, and did nothing. Time went on, and not a scrap of a clue to the thief of Mrs Lomax's diamonds was found, although London detectives took charge of the matter, and every step which ingenuity could suggest, and money pay for, was taken.

In due course Mr and Mrs Lomax went over to call upon Colonel Oxenden and to inquire about Mrs Oxenden, but the house was closed, and they were informed that Mrs Oxenden had been ordered to Egypt for the remainder of the winter.

Five months later, that is, in the month of April, the affair, which had been well-nigh forgotten by all but the sufferers, was recalled to public notice by a strange event.

Crashford—the market-town and centre of this part of Hopshire—boasted that it moved with the times. It did not, by a long way, but it persuaded itself that it did, and that was enough for the contentment of all. So, as every other town of any pretensions had a golf club, it was necessary for Crashford to have one, and a committee of public-spirited men was formed to select a site for links.

Blue Breezes Common, a wild tract of land, lying between Thru-down Hall and Crashford, was finally selected—a good nine-hole course, some very sporting bunkers, and easy of access to the town. At a certain point of the course, a footpath, known to very few people, leading from the Hall into Crashford town, cut across, and just here the open expanse of common was broken by

a 'spinney,' a collection of trees growing closely together in a circle out of a deepish excavation which had in past times been a gravel pit.

The outer edge of this plantation bordered the golf course, and the hole nearest to it was, from the awkwardness of this corner to all but accomplished drivers, known by the euphonious name of the 'Corker.'

Of course the links had to be formally opened, and the occasion was to be celebrated by a match between two well-known professionals, a members' handicap, and a dinner at the temporary club-house.

The day fixed was ideally April-like, and an ideal April day on an English common is not easily surpassed. All Crashford and neighbourhood worthy of consideration was present, and the bright spring costumes of the ladies, the red coats of the players, the cloud-dappled blue sky, the sunshine, and the beauty of the common and its surroundings, made up a healthy, cheery picture which would have inspired the veriest misanthrope for the nonce to think well of the world and of all in it.

The professionals played their match with a solemn and silent crowd tramping behind them, and cleared the 'Corker' with an ease and indifference which convinced every amateur duffer present that he could do the same. The members' handicap followed, and the 'Corker' received a goodly tribute of balls. In the gloaming a general adjournment to the club-house was made, and there was a grand rush of caddies to the 'Corker' for the purpose of picking up the balls in the spinney, to be sold at a cheap rate to the club 'pro' who would doctor them up a bit and re-sell them to members at eight shillings the dozen. Suddenly an urchin who had penetrated farther into the spinney than his fellows came rushing up, breathless and scared, crying:

'There's a skelinton in the Danes hole!'

Of course the rest of the youngsters left their quest for lost balls to view the discovery, and there, at the bottom of the excavation, they saw a heavily-coated figure lying in an easy posture of sleep, the hands thrust into the deep pockets, and, as the urchin had said, in the place of an ordinary head, a ghastly grinning skull.

The news was carried to the club-house, and a crowd of members were soon on their way to the scene of the discovery. They found that the clothes of the recumbent figure, much weather-stained and in some places falling to pieces, enshrouded the figure of a tall man.

'Some poor fellow who must have lost his way during the winter storms and have fallen into a snow-drift, which here would be twenty feet deep,' observed one man.

Upon undoing the ulster they found that the man was in evening dress, that he had a gold watch and chain, so that the skeleton was clearly that of no ordinary night wanderer. Upon withdrawing the hands from the pockets, each was found to be tightly clasped over a jewel-case.

'Mrs Lomax's diamonds!' exclaimed a bystander, a doctor. 'I remember them; they were lost upon the night of the December dance. It was a terrible night, for I was nearly snowed up myself.'

The question which now naturally suggested itself was, Who was the man?

There was a pocket-book in the coat; there was nothing in it to identify the owner, but there was distinct evidence that he was the thief, in the shape of a plan of Thrudown Hall approaches, and a map of the immediate neighbourhood upon which the short cut to Crashford across the common was strongly marked. In another pocket was a dance programme, the writing on which was barely decipherable, although the initials H. L. appeared more than once.

'Then the thief was either a guest at the dance or some fellow who had rigged himself up as a guest, and who had by virtue of his rig got into the house unnoticed,' said the doctor.

Just about the time of this discovery Colonel Oxenden and his wife returned to the Grange from Egypt, and the first people to welcome them home were their old friends, the Lomaxes.

Conversation naturally turned upon the loss and recovery of Mrs Lomax's diamonds, and in the course of chat Hetty recounted what Major Clifford had said about the figure he had seen moving in the neighbourhood of Mrs Lomax's bedroom.

'Major Clifford? who's he?' asked Colonel Oxenden.

'Why,' replied the squire, 'your guest here, who came to our dance as the representative of your "party."'

'Major Clifford!—our guest!—representative of our party!' exclaimed the colonel. 'Why, I don't know anybody of the name, and we had nobody staying in the house at the time.'

Mr and Mrs Lomax and Hetty exchanged looks of astonishment.

'But, dear,' said Mrs Lomax to Mrs Oxenden, 'in your note of regret—which, by the way, I remember observing was not written at all in your usual hand—you said that as our card of invitation was marked "And party," you hoped we would receive as your representative an old service friend of your husband's, Major Clifford.'

'My dear,' replied Mrs Oxenden, 'I could not have done so, for, as my husband says, we know no one of the name, and there was no one in the house but ourselves.'

'Well,' said the colonel, 'there's a funny misunderstanding somewhere. Let's send for John. He took the note.'

So John Thompson was rung for, and duly appeared.

'John,' said his master, 'you remember taking a note over to Thrudown Hall on the day when your mistress was first taken ill?'

'Yes, sir,' replied the coachman. 'Leastways, I—I didn't take the note all the way myself.'

'Didn't take the note all the way yourself! What do you mean?'

'Why, sir, it was this way. A few 'undred yards from the 'all I met Captain Mercer—you remember him, sir, what used to be of ours, he were called the Black Captain'—

'Mercer! that blackguard! I see it all now!' exclaimed the colonel. 'Well, go on.'

'Well, sir, he said as how he were stayin' at Squire Lomax's, and offered to take the note in himself, and as I were in a bit of a 'urry, I didn't see no 'arm in savin' myself a quarter of an hour, so I give it him.'

'All right; that will do. Don't be in such a hurry another time,' said the colonel. 'If you hadn't given up the note, Mrs Lomax wouldn't have lost her diamonds.'

The crestfallen John saluted, and left the room.

'It's all as clear as noonday,' said the colonel. 'This fellow Mercer was one of the biggest scoundrels who ever wore uniform. He had to send in his papers at last for a lot of shady operations in which he had been concerned—one he carried off on Mrs Enderby, wife of Bill Enderby, of the P. W. D., about a horse, and another, which wasn't brought straight home to him, about the imitation of a signature. I've never seen him since, but I heard that he'd gone regularly in for the swindling and robbing business, and that he'd served two or three terms for it.'

'Oh! what a wicked man!' exclaimed Hetty Lomax. 'He paid me such attention, and I thought him quite the nicest man at the dance. Then it isn't true what he told me about Mrs Enderby—that he'd found her out cheating at cards?'

'The Gay Grass Widow cheating at cards! Ha! ha! that's too bad!' laughed the colonel. 'Mrs Enderby liked a bit of fun as well as anybody, and went the pace in a ladylike way, but cheat at cards! not she!'

'Oh, how relieved I am!' said Hetty; 'and what a narrow escape I had of disgracing myself by accusing her of having taken mother's diamonds!'

'Then this rascal must have kept my wife's note,' said the colonel, 'rewritten it with his own embellishment, and posted it, for we didn't get it until the next morning.'

'Well, well!' said the squire. 'It's an ill wind that blows no good, and the bad weather at any rate relieved the world of a villain.'

THE 'MOUNTAIN MYSTERY' OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

By C. M'KAY SMITH.

READERS of the morning papers will have observed, among other items of cablegraphic news, a paragraph from Sydney, New South Wales, announcing the conviction and sentencing to death for murder, and later, on July 16, the execution of the notorious Frank Butler, whose surrender to colonial jurisdiction by process of extradition was made by the San Francisco authorities in February last. The criminal jurisdiction in Sydney had a considerable number of *aliases* from which to choose, as this fellow in careering round the world, sometimes as a soldier, sometimes as a sailor, frequently as a deserter, once as a West Australian policeman, and always as a scoundrel, was in the habit of taking a new departure in nomenclature at all times when prompted either by the exigencies of a career wholly criminal, or, as might be, in an occasional spirit of bravado or caprice. He was indifferently Frank Butler, Frank Harwood, Simpson, Clare, Newman, Richard Ashe, Lee Weller, Burgess—

a list which is probably far from exhaustive. 'Lee Weller' and 'Burgess' he temporarily borrowed from two of his victims respectively so called.

The events crowded into this paper cover little more than the concluding six months; are, in short, merely the finishing fringe of a blood-stained career. Our immediate concern with Butler falls between the dates of August 1896 and April 1897. What is left unrevealed may be not inaptly inferred from a remark made by him in a moment of unsophistication to Detective Roche on the voyage from San Francisco to Sydney: 'I ought rightly to have been hung fifteen years ago.' Before his execution he had, however, confessed to four murders.

About November of last year rumours were heard in Sydney of persons who had mysteriously disappeared from all knowledge whether of relations or friends. One of these was a young fellow named Arthur Preston, of respectable parentage and irreproachable antecedents. Another was Captain Lee Weller, a sea-captain by profession, and more or less of a world-rover by choice; but in all respects a man of worth, held in good repute by those who knew him. Yet another was a man named Burgess. As rumour began to congeal it got to be remembered that both Preston and the real Lee Weller had been met with, not as one party, but separately, in the company of the person subsequently identified as Butler, in the neighbourhood of Glenbrook, in the Blue Mountains, somewhere about forty to forty-five miles from Sydney. In camping in the ranges, the professed object, as effusively explained by Butler to chance wayfarers, was that of prospecting for gold. About mid-October Butler, under the *alias* of 'Clare,' had put up for about a week at the Railway Dining-rooms, George Street, Sydney, the proprietor of which, Mr E. Thompson, subsequently remembered having had his attention directed to an advertisement, 'Wanted, a mate for a prospecting trip in "equal shares,"' a bait which, as subsequently appeared, was the one systematically used by Butler for the entrapment of his victims in the first instance. From Mr Thompson's evidence given at Preston's inquest—if for the moment events may be slightly anticipated—it would seem that Preston must have responded to Butler's (*alias* Clare's) advertisement, as on 19th October last the two set out together for Glenbrook, Thompson being their accidental fellow-passenger as far as Emu Plains, a point on the railway line about five miles short of the ultimate destination. Three days later, on the night of 22d October, Preston and Butler were seen together by one George Campbell, at the head of a gully near 'Numantia.' From that date poor young Preston disappears from human ken until the afternoon of 3d December, when his festering remains were discovered by a search-party aided by a black tracker, which for several days had been patiently although not very hopefully investigating the forest recesses in a very rugged line of country, on the chance of being able to rescue the missing youth if in need, or alternatively of discovering any possible trace of him. In a gully between the Numantia and

Linden platforms of the western main line of railway, and about ten miles higher up the line than Glenbrook, a mound of freshly-turned earth under a rocky ledge attracted attention. On this being upturned, the party, which included several police-officers, came upon what was left on the world's surface of Arthur Preston, with a shot-wound through the skull, from which death, in the language of a professional witness who gave evidence before the coroner, must have been practically instantaneous. Notwithstanding the processes of decay, the features were clearly defined as in life, and the identification of the victim was complete.

The murder of Captain Lee Weller is but little more than a repeat of that of Preston. From the laying of the advertising bait until the discovery of the remains, the means used were almost identical; and the short interval between the two events indicated a nefarious activity suggestive of a determination to get through as much work as possible before flying the country. Lee Weller, a well-set-up figure in the prime of his days, was last seen alive and in Butler's company on the 31st October. His dead body, in a quite horrifying attitude, was found on Sunday, 6th December, in a deserted gully a little more than a mile from the Glenbrook railway station. The grave was about three feet long, and the visual effect of the compression necessary to ensure concealment in the limited space was such as almost to overwhelm the strong men of the constabulary upon whom fell the terrible function of exhumation and removal, necessitated as well by the requirements of justice as by considerations of decent re-consignment to earth's bosom. Very possibly Lee Weller was in more or less happy unconsciousness of his transition from life to death. He was shot through the head from behind, and by a rifle and not a pistol bullet. His identification as in the other instance left no room for doubt. His friend Mr Biggs, of the Pier Hotel, Manly—a coastal watering-place near Sydney—whose evidence was taken at the inquest, was one of several who did not in the least participate in the confidence reposed by him in the man Butler, and who jointly with Mr Luckham, a journalist, with whom Weller was also on terms of intimacy, warned him in no doubtful terms against the folly of entering into quasi-partnership with this wholly unknown human quantity.

These brutal murders had no ostensible object beyond the capture of what might be found upon the persons of the respective victims; but as Captain Lee Weller is said to have left Sydney plentifully provided with cash, besides a considerable quantity of jewellery, this part of the speculation may after all not have panned-out so badly.

A third victim named Burgess has been referred to. This one, also in his early manhood, was in reality the first of Butler's known victims, although the latest in the order of discovery. Here the *venue* is changed. The Black Range, about four hundred miles from Sydney, is the scene of this particular tragedy. Burgess was last seen in Butler's company near a place called Bimberry on 25th August last; but there being nothing at or about that time to suggest the presumption of foul play, it was supposed by his intimates that he might have betaken himself for purposes of

legitimate mining adventure to West Australia or other distant gold-field. The discoveries of the bodies of Preston and Lee Weller, however, pointed to the probability of another and more tragical conclusion in Burgess's case, and an investigation of the ranges by searchers, moved by the hope of earning a substantial reward, which had in the meantime been announced, resulted in the discovery on 20th January of his body, done to death by a bullet wound, fired from behind in the usual way. In this instance, and owing to the longer interval, the flesh of the face, scalp, and neck had become decomposed, and personal identification was well-nigh impossible, but other means of arriving at the truth were not wanting. 'After the murders of Weller and Preston,' observes a Sydney newspaper, 'some of the effects of the men were appropriated by the murderer, while other articles, especially clothing, were flung about anywhere, as if the culprit had become too excited and anxious to know what he was doing. There are evidences of the same trepidation or frenzy after the Black Range murder. Burgess must have taken off his coat near the spot where he began digging the hole in which he was afterwards buried. The coat was found about twenty yards away, and seemed to have been thrown down as the murderer was hurrying out of the scrub back to the track leading down to the camp.'

Fortunately Butler had in a moment of unusual exuberance of sentiment left a photograph of himself with a respectable waitress at Gillham's dining-house in Sydney. As soon as the hue-and-cry set in this was at once placed in the hands of the authorities. It is not overstating the case to observe that in the absence of this one link—this blunder so to term it—Butler would to a moral certainty have been a free man to-day, with every opportunity of making further distinction for himself in the art of exterminating his species. At every stage of the various inquests reduplicated copies of this sun-picture led to his immediate recognition as in each instance the partner or companion of the murdered men. Even then his case had not been a hopeless one but for a second act of almost incredible folly. The effects stolen from Captain Lee Weller included the sea-going certificates and papers of that gentleman. Proceeding to Newcastle (N.S.W.) about 14th November, Butler had the audacity to adopt the name along with the title-deeds; and after loafing about the place for rather over a week he shipped as 'able seaman Lee Weller' on board the sailing ship *Swanhilda*, which left Newcastle for San Francisco with a cargo of coal on the 23d of that month. At that date the disappearance of Preston, Weller, and Burgess were disappearances and nothing more. Suspicion had not reached the acute stage. But in early December the full murders stood revealed, and the criminal was badly 'wanted.' Detective Machattie, a highly-efficient member of the constabulary stationed at Newcastle, had a sufficiently acute recollection of spotting the spurious 'Lee Weller' while that person kept loitering about the port; and when it came to be known that the real owner of the name had to a practical certainty met with foul play, Machattie, who on 28th November first obtained a view of one of the copies of Butler's likeness, evinced no hesitation in at once pronouncing it as doubly representing the able

seaman of the *Swanhilda* and the missing malefactor. Conroy, who fortuitously joined the police force in Sydney the very day the *Swanhilda* left Newcastle, and whom Butler had some little time before tried to victimise in the usual fashion, was also able to recognise his man in the copy of the photograph exhibited to him by Detective Roche, a superior officer of the force; but the connecting link, the recognition of Butler as one and the same person with the able seaman of the *Swanhilda*, was Machattie's notable contribution to the location of the murderer. All further doubt was from this point at an end, and the machinery was at once set in motion for the interception of the murderer before being made free of the shore at San Francisco. Roche, Machattie, and Conroy were the officers detached for that purpose, a task which, with many vexatious delays in carrying the case through the rather formidable complications of the American courts, they have successfully and most creditably accomplished, reaching Sydney with their prisoner on 27th April.

The voyage of the *Swanhilda* to San Francisco was not an uninterrupted one. The S.S. *Taupo*, trading between the Australian continent and the South Seas, came within 'speaking' distance of the ship some ten days or so after her leaving port. The *Taupo* signalled 'have important communication to make.' The *Swanhilda* at once backed her yards and waited for the coming alongside of an officer from the *Taupo* with a batch of Auckland (N.Z.) newspapers in his possession, in which appeared summarised cablegraphic particulars from Sydney of the first two inquests as well as the identification of Butler with the pretended Lee Weller. Every care was taken and successfully so to conceal the object of the *Taupo's* communication from all but Captain Fraser and his first officer, who, upon scanning the newspapers after the officer of the *Taupo's* departure, at once became conscious that the Glenbrook murderer and the sham Lee Weller were one and the same person. The cause alleged throughout the ship for the *Taupo's* visit was that of reporting the recent discovery of some uncharted reefs. While the boat was alongside, and her officer closeted with Captain Fraser, one of the crew of the *Swanhilda*, subsequently ascertained by his own admission to have been Butler, accosted the *Taupo* boat's crew over the ship's side with the query, 'What do you want here?'—a query which was left unrepplied to. Captain Fraser and his chief, with a considerable amount of nerve, decided after anxious consultation that the preferable course would be that of keeping their own counsel, at the same time to quietly keep their man under view. As the days passed they were the more satisfied with the wisdom of this course in the evident absence of suspicion in Butler's mind, being at the same time probably enough influenced by the man's efficiency as a seaman and his quiet demeanour as a member of the crew. It is evident that even upon arrival at the American port Butler was without premonition of the disagreeable surprise awaiting him, a thing not so remarkable when it is remembered that in his own mind his precautions for obscuring his victims from the sight of men in the untrodden depths of barren and pathless mountain ranges would have secured to him, if not absolute immunity from danger, at least a

sufficient interval to protract discovery to a period when a new *alias* and a new sphere of operation would have obliterated all trace of his handiwork in New South Wales.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Most persons who have had photographic experience are apt to regard any alleged discovery of the art of producing sun-pictures in the colours of nature with incredulity; for many such discoveries have been made, and all have ended in disappointment. Photography in colour has indeed been a fruitful field for the adventurer and the speculator; for such a scheme is attractive to the ignorant, and upon the ignorance of others such persons thrive. Several processes by which photographs may be produced in colour have recently been brought forward, and specimens, not very satisfactory to competent critics, have been exhibited. Perhaps the method which has been most talked about is that known as the Damsac-Chassagne process, which the Society of Arts, London, has to some extent taken under its wing. Much was expected of this new discovery, which, it was said, enabled any one, by means of certain solutions poured over a photographic print, to endow the picture with what was termed 'selective absorption,' so that when afterwards immersed in baths of various dyes the colours would attach themselves in their proper places—the blue to the sky, the green to the trees, and so forth. The secretary of the above-named society now writes to the technical papers to say that certain modifications must be made in his statements previously put forward with regard to this process, and our readers will be able to judge from the following quotation from his remarks how far the 'selective absorption' theory can be sustained: 'Judging from the work of the skilled operators whom I have watched in M. Chassagne's studio, I can only say that in their hands the process is certainly not entirely automatic. The operator requires to know generally what the colours should be, and the results largely depend on his judgment and skill in applying the colour in the right places.'

The pigeon-flying contest promoted by the Leeds Homing Society afforded a good instance of the remarkable instinct possessed by carrier-pigeons in finding their way home from a distant point, as well as an illustration of the great rapidity of their flight. The birds were taken to Rennes, in France, a place about 100 miles south of Cherbourg, and started on their journey at half-past five in the morning. The first bird, a two-year-old black chequer, arrived at Leeds before six o'clock on the same evening, having travelled at the rate of 900 yards per minute—assuming that it flew in a straight line from start to finish.

Part of a huge octopus, the proportions of which must throw all descriptions of such an animal by imaginative writers into the shade, was lately cast upon the beach near St Augustine, Florida.

Professor Verrill, of Yale University, examined this curious derelict, and believed it to be a distinct species from all known forms, and has suggested that it should be named *Octopus giganteus*. The part of the creature thrown up by the sea weighed six tons, and it is calculated that the living animal must have had a length of 26 feet and a girth of 5 feet, with arms 72 feet long, provided with suckers as large as dinner-plates.

The closing years of the century are bringing forth many new and strange designs for ships. The French roller ship, of which so much was expected, must have disappointed her admirers, for she has as yet only attained a speed of six knots; but we learn that better results are looked for later on. In Italy a vessel of novel construction is now in progress. Its framework consists of round wrought-iron bars, to which is fixed a close network of iron having meshes of a quarter of an inch. Inside and out this network receives a coating of fine concrete, which finally is rubbed down and polished so as to diminish liquid friction. This method of construction involves more weight in the hull than that attached to a wooden ship of the same size, but considerably less than one plated with metal. The result of this new departure in shipbuilding will be watched with great interest.

Mr William Tate has crowned a series of handsome gifts to his fellow-countrymen by presenting London with a palatial building, a National Gallery of British Art, and has furnished it with sixty-five valuable paintings, the total cost of the noble benefaction being about £200,000. To these pictures have been added a contingent from the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square, and the fine collection purchased for the nation under the terms of the Chantrey bequest. For the first time in the history of British art the student can study that art as a whole, so far as it is represented by works produced during the present century. The gift, besides being one of far-reaching good to the country, is a noble example to the rich, showing them what a superb monument a generous man can raise for himself to keep his memory green. The new gallery, a very beautiful building, stands on the banks of the Thames near Vauxhall, on the site once occupied by an extremely ugly and gloomy erection which was devoted to a far less noble purpose, Millbank Prison.

In a lecture before the Edinburgh Association of Science and Arts, which has just been published, Mr George Somerville, a practical engineer, draws attention once more to the marvellous improvements in the manufacture of iron and steel during the Victorian era. He pays a well-deserved tribute to James Nasmyth, the inventor of the steam-hammer, with whom he came personally into contact. He was much impressed by his extraordinary energy and genius; and, being ambidextrous, he was able to draw or sketch or handle a hammer or chisel with either hand. The laboratory or workshop in his own home he called 'Fireside.' Even though sitting in church, when a new idea came across his brain he rose and walked off to his workshop, and made a drawing, or, in order to preserve it in form, he would either forge it in iron or make a wooden pattern. The work of Lord Armstrong and Joseph Whitworth is also mentioned; and he

says that, for several years before the expiry of his patents, Sir Henry Bessemer's profits from the royalties, &c. on his new method of steel-making were £500,000 a year. He calculates the saving to the world in cost on the Bessemer method, as compared to iron of the same weight, at £40,000,000 annually. He heard Bessemer say in 1862 that a rail made by his methods, put into a busy crossing alongside an iron rail, stood while twenty-three iron rails were replaced. The Siemens-Martin process is also described, the Forth Bridge steel having been made by this open-hearth method; while he speaks hopefully of nickel steel, the latest improvement, as it is fibrous, without the treacherous brittleness of carbon steel. It is largely used by the British and foreign governments for armour plates. The steamer which Messrs Harland & Wolff, Belfast, are building for the White Star Line is of larger dimensions and greater power and speed than any steamship afloat, being 700 feet long, or 20 feet more than the *Great Eastern*, 'as it is considered that 15,000 horse-power is about the limit of safety to pass through a single shaft of mild steel.' The shafts are being forged of this latest and most improved nickel steel, its elastic limit being so much higher.

The invention of an improved kind of diving-bell is reported from Paris. It consists of a steel-plated bowl or globe about 10 feet in diameter, and weighing as many tons, which can be propelled along a river-bottom by the agency of electricity. For the admission of the crew, consisting of from four to six persons, a manhole is provided, and the cabin contains sufficient air—so it is said—to last them forty-eight hours! The crew can communicate with a boat, or with the adjacent land, by telephone, and when they wish to ascend they simply overturn two tanks filled with ballast. This wonderful machine has recently been employed in exploring the bed of the Seine, and its inventor has sanguine hopes that it will do remarkable things in deep-sea work, the discovery of the exact whereabouts of the ill-fated *Drummond Castle* being mentioned as one of the possibilities in store for it. It will also be useful in repairing cables, and in the pearl and sponge fisheries. There appears to be no pump or air-supply to this newfangled diving-bell, and unless the inventor has learnt how to override the laws of nature, he will find that at a certain depth his strange vessel will become half-full of water. In the old-fashioned diving-bell the function of the air-tube is to keep the water out, besides furnishing fresh oxygen for the inmates.

Hang-chau, or Hang-chow, a Chinese city situated about 210 miles south-west of Shanghai, has since the Japanese war been opened up to foreign trade, and the first British consular report from it, now to hand, gives more information about the place than was previously obtainable. It is a great emporium of the silk trade, there being no fewer than 7000 hand-loom in the place. The silk manufactured is of the finest quality, all that is required for the imperial household being made here. The city is prosperous, and clean compared with other cities of the empire, is thirteen miles in circumference, and has ten gates. Temples, pagodas, and other picturesque buildings are placed on the hills, embosomed in the foliage of azaleas, honeysuckle, and bamboo.

The country round about is well cultivated, the mulberry-tree being planted wherever possible. Foreigners are not subject to the abuse they experience in other parts of China, the natives being fully alive to the advantages of trading with them. Here is the famous Hang-chau bore, or tidal wave, formed by the north-east trade-wind heaping up the waters of the Pacific and driving them into the funnel-shaped bay. The sea-wave, being confronted by the current of the river running in the opposite direction, forms a solid wall of water fifteen feet in height, which rushes up the narrow stream at the rate of fifteen miles an hour.

It may be mentioned here, as a matter of great interest to silk-weavers nearer home, that at St Etienne no fewer than 1200 looms are being worked by electricity produced from a central station. Two-thirds of these looms are in the town, and the remainder in the surrounding districts, even up to thirty miles distant. The price charged by the company supplying this current is only 8s. per month for each loom, with an allowance of 4d. per day when the loom is idle. The production of silk per loom is increased no less than 25 per cent. by this innovation, and many poor weavers who were incapacitated by age and lack of strength are now able to resume work under the improved conditions.

In the recent report of the operations of the Royal Mint an interesting note occurs with reference to the suitability of the steel employed for making dies. It seems that there has always been a great uncertainty with reference to this matter, so much so that an engraver, after having devoted months of work in the preparation of a die, was always uncertain whether the metal would stand the hardening process successfully. Hitherto the steel employed was subjected to careful chemical analysis before the graver touched it, a most laborious process. But now far more information as to the suitability of the steel for this special purpose is afforded by placing a thin section of it beneath the microscope and photographing the enlarged image. It seems to be rather a reversal of the ordinary course of things to be able to judge from its visual appearance rather than from chemical analysis whether a material possesses the particular properties desirable.

The natural astonishment caused by the discovery of the X-rays has not yet abated, if we may judge by the constant references to them in the press. We frequently hear, chiefly from foreign sources, of the wonderful new uses to which these mysterious rays are being put. The last novelty in this direction is the employment of the rays for the examination of passengers' luggage by the Customs authorities in order to detect the presence of dutiable goods. Elaborate trials have been made in Paris of this new system of espionage, and, it is said, with marked success; cigars, tobacco, lace, and other hidden luxuries being discerned with the greatest ease without unlocking or opening the receptacles in which they are concealed. Great results are anticipated by the sapient officials from this new application of the Röntgen rays. But it is unfortunate that none of those same officials had that elementary knowledge of the subject which would at once suggest that a tinfoil cover to any package would

at once render it impenetrable by the rays. Thus, if two packages, one of soap and the other of tobacco, were so protected, the most accomplished X-ray worker could not distinguish the one from the other.

Can sound be photographed? This is the problem which the ingenious Professor Boys—who has already photographed a bullet in its flight, with certain invisible disturbances of the air which accompany it—has set himself to solve. It came about in this way. A reliable correspondent had alleged that he had watched, after an explosion of dynamite on a sunshiny day, the shadow of the wave of sound travelling over the ground for a distance of quite half a mile, the shadow being so distinct that he felt certain it could be photographed. Thereupon Professor Boys obtained permission from Mr Maxim, of machine-gun fame, to be present when he was next exploding dynamite. Professor Boys saw the shadow plainly, but was unable to secure its image in the camera. Mr Maxim suggests that what is thought to be the shadow of the sound-wave may very reasonably be a progressive bending down of the grass-blades, dust, &c. as the explosive wave passes. It is evident that further observation is necessary. If the phenomenon is seen in the absence of sunshine, it would certainly point to the truth of Mr Maxim's surmise.

If Mr Hudson Maxim's view be correct, a naval force of the future will differ as much from the wondrous spectacle afforded by the recent review at Spithead as that exhibition of war-ships differed from one possible in Nelson's time. In a paper read before the Royal United Service Institution on the subject of his recently invented 'aerial torpedo,' he pointed out that for some years there had been a race for supremacy between guns and ships' armour. But now that it was possible to throw high explosives in sufficiently large quantities to render armour of no avail, navies would discard that useless means of defence, and everything on shipboard would be made subservient to speed and mobility. Guns of far larger calibre would be used, but they would have thinner walls, and would therefore be proportionately lighter; the projectile would consist of a thin shell of metal containing a mass of explosive which would work infinitely more destruction than the projectiles thrown at present from the heaviest guns. Comparing the Whitehead torpedo with his suggested aerial torpedo, Mr Maxim said that the effective range of the former, carrying a charge of 200 lb. of gun-cotton, was less than one mile; while the latter, with a charge of 1400 lb. of a more energetic explosive, would have a range more than five times as great. He further said that at the present cost of one battle-ship a fleet of torpedo cruisers could be built capable of destroying a thousand such battle-ships. From all this it will be seen that the future navy will be a huge man-slaying machine, without any opportunity for the exhibition of personal courage or heroism. Surely under such conditions no nation which respects itself will care to boast that it 'rules the waves.'

In a recent issue of the French scientific periodical *La Nature*, M. Paul Ménégnin asks the question why we should not regard monkeys

as our friends, and bases their claim to this distinction upon their intelligence and the ease with which they may be trained. The monkey, he tells us, has a bad name simply because he is spoilt, as children are spoilt. It is true that all monkeys have not the same amount of intelligence, but most varieties can be readily trained, and the imitative faculty with which they are so strongly endowed permits them to learn all kinds of feats very rapidly. At one establishment in Hamburg two hundred monkeys are kept, and they enjoy complete liberty of movement. They are given playthings like children have, and they use them with intelligence. Here there is an immense grain receptacle or hopper, full of seeds, nuts, and other dainties beloved of monkeys. These delicacies fall into a trough below when a wheel at the top of the hopper is turned. The monkeys learnt to do this without instruction, and when one animal has had his turn at the wheel he signals to another to be relieved, and joins the feasters at the trough below.

TOLD BESIDE THE BINNACLE.

ONE golden September afternoon, a brig called the *Alice*, of London, was running towards the land, bound for the little port of Fordham on the southern coast. A steady breeze coming over the water filled her sails and sent her slipping along at quite a record pace. The rich, warm sunlight turned her gray and patched canvas into gossamer, gave an airy lightness to her clumsy spars, flashed from the binnacle cover and cabin skylight, brightened up the bit of green paint on her deck-house, and sparkled in the spray that shot up from under her bow as she rose and fell with the motion of the waves till it looked like showers of diamonds. Shorewards, the faint outline of the land was just discernible through a veil of purple haze. Overhead the sky was flecked with clouds that were ever changing in their shape and tints; and as for the surface of the sea, the hues of it that September afternoon would have defied the brush of the finest artist that ever lived.

It was an ideal sailor's day, and the mate of the *Alice* seemed to think so as he stood at the wheel, bringing his eyes every now and again off the compass case to glance aloft at the swelling canvas, or away over the iridescent sea. He was a young fellow of some seven or eight and twenty, keen of eye and strong of limb, with no traces of gold lace or fine broadcloth about him—his dress being an old pair of check trousers, a blue jersey, and a cloth cap. Beside him stood the skipper, thirty years older, with a fiery face and moist eyes—an ugly customer if you put him out, but on the whole a kindly-natured man, who knew every headland and every sandbank round the British coast. Now and then you caught sight of a shaggy figure in shirt and trousers moving about the deck forward, and the sound of voices came aft from the fore-castle.

The *Alice* had never sailed better. Already the little port was in sight, and pretty enough it looked as they approached it, with the spars of the shipping peeping up above the breakwater, behind

them the red-tiled roofs of the houses on the quayside, and behind these again the great square tower of Fordham Church, a landmark to mariners for many a century, and all set in a frame of chalk cliffs, green hills and woodland, and lighted up with the golden sunshine that caught every scrap of colour that was anywhere about, from the bit of bunting on a ship's masthead to the white houses upon the hillside at the back of the town. To enter the harbour to-day was child's play.

'If you keep yonder church about eight points on your port bow it'll take you straight in,' said the skipper.

'I dare say you could find your way in blind-folded,' remarked the mate.

The old man grunted and shrugged his shoulders. 'I ought to,' he answered. 'I've known it as man and boy these fifty years, and many's the time I've had to feel my way in, as you may say. Only last winter I brought up off here in a fog that thick you couldn't see half-a-mile ahead of you, a slack tide and a light wind. But I got in without a scrape.'

'Another time, I was in charge of a topsail schooner, got caught in a gale in the Channel and lost our topmast. A heavy sea was runnin' across the bar, and thick snow squalls hid the land every now and again. I put two men at the wheel, kept the lead going, told all hands to hold on like grim death, and got in without partin' a rope-yarn; but I wouldn't care to do it again. It's all right when you get inside; but, as you can see for yourself, when you get a strong sou'-wester and a heavy sea it's a dangerous port to make. The timbers of many a stout craft are scattered along this coast in winter time. Have I ever bin ashore here? Yes!—Twice. The first time I made a mistake in the tides, and grounded outside the bar, but luckily it was fair weather and she came off safely next tide. The next time, I thought it was all up with us. We were being towed out in the teeth of half a gale when the hawser parted and we fouled the pier, carrying away all the head-gear, and went ashore just inside the breakwater. If it had been outside, she'd ha' bin smashed into matchwood before morning. But though I've bin in and out of Fordham sometimes two or three times a year for the last fifty years, I never see that church without bein' reminded of my first voyage, and its ending. I was a slip of a lad, barely fifteen at the time, and I'd shipped aboard a ketch called the *Pride of Rochester*, for want of a better craft. You know what that means—little food and plenty of ropes' end, that was my fare. The skipper was a savage and a drunken one too, and I believe if it hadn't bin for the mate, a man named Tucker, I should ha' bin pitched overboard before the voyage was over. We were bound here with a cargo of slates. The weather was fine, and we had a good passage. As soon as we'd discharged the cargo, we hauled out into the river to wait for orders. The skipper he goes ashore, and right glad I was to see the back of him, leaving me and Bob Tucker—that was the mate—aboard.

'He was a decent sort o' chap, and I think I'd ha' done pretty well anything for him for savin' me from the captain. He tried his best to persuade me to give up seafarin' and settle down to some trade ashore, and used to tell me some

o' the things he'd gone through since he'd bin to sea. I don't know how many times he hadn't bin shipwrecked; but though I was pretty sick of it myself, I wouldn't own up to it, and used to think it would be grand to be able to tell such yarns as he could. Ah! I don't suppose he ever thought that was to be his last voyage, but it was. It happened like this. We'd been lyin' out in the river for over a week, when there came a change in the weather, and after a cloudy and unsettled day or two the wind got away to the sou'-west and began to pipe up strong, and in a few hours it was blowin' a heavy gale. Craft caught in the Channel ran for the nearest shelter. Brigs and schooners came in with torn sails and splintered spars, and one or two o' the fishin'-boats came to grief on the bar. Before long there was a pretty lively sea all round the coast, and it was washing clean over the pier-heads yonder. So you may guess that even inside we felt it. The ketch, bein' light, pitched and rolled at her anchorage like a cork; but we rode with a good bit o' cable, and there was no other craft near us.

'The next night the gale was at its height. Heavy gusts o' wind swept across the harbour, whistling and shrieking wildly amongst the riggin', and bringing up with them squalls o' thick rain that hid the lights o' the town altogether.

'I was on deck keepin' watch, cold, wet, and miserable, when I noticed that the cable every now and again seemed to jerk and rattle as it had not done before. So I went aft and told the mate, who was smokin' in the cabin.

"By God! she's dragging," he shouted, as soon as he'd bin on deck a few moments. "We shall be ashore before we know where we are. Bear a hand here, lad. Smart's the word now!" and he laid hold o' the painter o' the little boat that was bobbin' up and down astern o' us.

'Hand over hand we got it alongside, and I plucked up courage to ask him what he was goin' to do.

"Goin' to do? Why, I'm goin' ashore to get help. You and I can't get out another anchor alone. You keep a sharp lookout, and when you hear me call show a light over the side," and with that he was gone.

'I didn't like bein' left alone, you may be sure. I was only a youngster, you must remember, and it was my first voyage. I thought she'd go ashore and break up whilst he was gone, and then I should be drowned; and the next moment I wondered whether he would get back safely. How long he was away I don't know. It seemed to me like hours. I strained my ears to listen for his voice, and during one of the momentary lulls in the howling of the gale I heard yonder church bells strike nine. And still the anchor dragged, and still we drifted. At last I caught the sound of a shout far off. I jumped up and waved the lantern over the side. Then came another wait, followed by another shout this time clear and close at hand. Again I showed the light, and the next moment I heard the splash of oars alongside, and the mate and a stranger, both drippin' wet from head to foot, clambered on deck. Then we turned to get out a kedge. We got the spare anchor up from the hold, bent on a stout hawser to it, and prepared to lower it into the boat. Bob Tucker and the stranger

got into the boat, and bade me "lower away" when I was told. But exactly what happened next in the darkness and confusion I could never clearly remember. The gale seemed to have got ten times worse. It was difficult to hear one's self speak. If possible, too, it seemed to have got darker: I could just faintly see the forms of the two men moving about in the boat as it tossed alongside. Suddenly I heard agonising shouts for help. I looked over the side, and the boat was gone.

'Frightened? I should just think I was frightened! I added my shouts to theirs; but you might as well have spoken in a whisper for all anybody would have heard you that night. I rushed wildly to and fro, throwing over ropes' ends and anything I could lay my hands upon. I felt horribly helpless as I listened to their cries getting fainter and fainter until at last they ceased altogether, and I knew that they were drowned. I can't tell ye what I felt like for the rest of that night. I dare not go down below, and even on deck I fancied I could see their faces close beside me: and their cries were ringing in my ears. I forgot all about the gale and the danger of going ashore. But sure enough we did go ashore; when daylight broke I found that the ketch was lying on her bilge on the mud. Then I got into the rigging and shouted and waved my arms, until at last some one came off to me. They wouldn't believe me at first; but in the course of the day poor old Tucker's body was picked up, and the boat was found floating, bottom upwards, by a fisherman. As for the ketch, which had cost the mate his life, she took no harm, and was got off safe and sound next tide.

'That cured me of seafarin' for a time. I stayed ashore for a year or two; but then the old longin' came back, and I went north in a collier. But I never see yonder church without thinkin' of poor old Bob Tucker and his fate.'

THE BUTTERFLY—AN ALLEGORY.

Born with the spring, to die when fades the rose,
Floating on zephyr's wings through purest air,
Poised on the breast of flow'rs when they unclose,
Perfumes and azure light his summer fare!
On vans of fluttering velvet lightly springing,
Faint as a breath through boundless heaven winging,
Such destiny the butterfly attends!
He seems like young Desire that knows no rest,
And tasting earthly pleasure still unblest,
To heaven at last in quest of joy ascends.

GEORGE MONREAL.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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CHRISTOPHER COLBECK'S HEAD.

By W. E. CULE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS—CHAPTER I.

CHRISTOPHER COLBECK was dying. For three days he had lain upon his bed without word or movement, save for the dull, unquestioning glance with which he had greeted and followed all who came. The first seizure had deprived him of speech and motion, and the next would be fatal. It might come at any moment.

It was then that Robert Heigham, the sick man's nephew and only relative, requested that he should be left alone in the patient's room for a short time. There were some private matters, he said, which he would try to communicate to his uncle, and he thought he would be able to ascertain Mr Colbeck's wishes with regard to them.

The physicians hesitated at first, but eventually gave way. The end was very near, and an interview would not be likely to hasten it, though they warned the young man to avoid excitement. Closing the door softly, they went downstairs.

'I suppose Mr Heigham is the heir?' remarked Dr Butler, the consulting physician from Liverpool, as they entered the drawing-room together.

The local doctor's name was Hornbuck. He was a man of slow speech, but excellent professional standing.

'I suppose so,' he answered with hesitation. 'He is the only relative, and has been Mr Colbeck's right-hand man in business for some years. Yes, I suppose he is the heir.'

'Is there much?' asked Dr Butler, with a curious glance at the substantial furniture of the room.

'Very much, I believe. There is the business, you know. Mr Heigham will have that in any case. That is something, but Mr Colbeck has a large private fortune as well. He was an able business man.'

Dr Butler nodded, and settled himself in an easy-chair to wait. Two or three minutes later they were briskly discussing a recent article in the *British Medical Journal* on the minor functions of the cerebellum.

In the room above, Robert Heigham had drawn his chair to the bedside. His manner was visibly agitated, and his keen, sallow face was pale, but he had thoroughly prepared himself for this interview. That it was to be an interview with a man who could neither move nor speak did not discourage him. In his younger days he had read *Monte Christo*.

Christopher Colbeck's eyes were fixed upon Heigham, dumbly following his every motion. There was a dim consciousness in them, but none of that life and spirit which people knew so well. For a moment or two Heigham gazed steadily into his face.

'Uncle,' he said then, clearly and slowly, 'I am going to show you how to speak to me. When you wish to answer "Yes" you must close your eyes once. Do you understand?'

He waited anxiously. For a few seconds there was no sign. Then it seemed to him that a gleam of intelligence appeared in the heavy eyes, and the eyelids suddenly dropped.

'That is right,' he said with satisfaction. Then, in a still clearer tone:

'I thought you might wish to give me some instructions. Is there any business matter which you would like to have settled at once?'

A longer pause followed. It seemed that the sick man was considering. Then the eyelids dropped again.

'Yes!' muttered Heigham, with increased agitation. Then aloud:

'I will mention in succession all the chief

matters in which you are engaged. When I reach the one you mean, you must let me know.'

He went slowly through a list of the most important matters in which Christopher Colbeck, Finance Agent, had been engaged at the time of his seizure, pausing after every one. But the end was reached without a sign.

'Then it is none of those,' said Robert Heigham, still clearly and firmly. 'Now I will repeat the letters of the alphabet. Give the sign when I reach the initial letter of the word you wish to speak.'

He commenced slowly: 'A, B, C, D, E, F,'—and there the sign was given.

'It is F,' said Heigham to himself; and he mentally ran through those business matters again.

'F—ha! is it Forest?' he cried. 'But no—I mentioned Forest before!'

There was no motion in answer. Plainly it was not Forest's matter.

'Fernley—is it Fernley's mortgage? We have advanced him eight hundred pounds,' said the nephew, with sudden remembrance.

Ha! there the eyelids fell again.

'So! It is Fernley's mortgage. What do you wish? The last half-year's interest has not been paid. Do you wish me to foreclose?'

There was no answer.

'Do you wish me to give him an extension of time?'

He waited, but still in vain. Only one suggestion remained.

'Do you wish to release him?'

The reply came instantly. 'Yes.'

'Very well,' said the new head of the firm, after a pause, 'I will do so. If you like, I will write a note here, now. Then you can sign it. I will guide the pen in your hand, and you can make a mark. I will be your witness.'

The eyelids dropped again. There was no doubt on this matter—no hesitation. It was pathetic to see the eagerness that now shone in the eyes, the avidity with which they watched their interpreter's movements.

Heigham was anxious to please his uncle now, even more anxious than he had been in business, where his keen ability and quickness of perception had so rapidly brought him to the second place. For time was going, and he had not yet reached the true object of this interview.

There were writing materials at hand, so in a few moments he had written a paper releasing John Fernley from all indebtedness whatever to Christopher Colbeck, his heirs, assigns and business successors, in respect of a sum of eight hundred pounds, advanced on mortgage of certain premises. When it was done, he brought it to the bed, and the sick man's eyes ran over it eagerly. Heigham then placed the sheet on a blotter, and fixed a pen between those dead fingers which would never write again. A minute later Christopher Colbeck had signed his last document.

Heigham laid it down upon the table. All this was only an incident, and he felt no respect, no admiration for that touching loyalty which could remember a boyhood's friend even in the hour of death.

But now came the crisis. He drew nearer, and bent over the bed. When he spoke, his voice was husky and uncertain.

'Uncle,' he began, 'is there anything else?'

Do you wish to say anything about your—about your private affairs?'

It was a bold question which he would not have dared to utter under other circumstances, but he had nerved himself to it now. Yet his answer was not the look of angry suspicion which he had expected: not that, but a full, clear gaze of eager intelligence and satisfaction. Then the affirmative sign was made.

'What is it, then?' he asked quickly. 'Is it about your servants? No! Your house? No! Is it about your will? Ah!'

Christopher Colbeck had closed his eyes again at the last question. Heigham gave a few seconds to consideration before he continued.

'You gave me to understand that you had made your will in 1886. Do you desire to alter or—destroy it?'

No answer, only a long look of painful impatience. Robert Heigham passed his handkerchief across his brows, which were damp with sweat. He knew the contents of the will of 1886, as he knew the purport of every document in his uncle's private desk.

'Do you—do you wish to add a codicil, then?'

He asked in a voice which he could not steady.

'No!'

'Have you done so?'

'No!'

He stopped, perceiving that he was near success now. His next question was a proof of his quickness of understanding.

'Have you made a later will?'

'Yes.'

The answer was immediate and certain. Heigham turned his face from the bed to conceal a look of triumph. He felt that he was safe—that he had not worked in vain. Then he saw that his uncle's eyes were watching him with increased anxiety. There was more to be said—something, perhaps, that would put an end to the racking doubt which had tortured him so long, and satisfy his greed and covetousness.

He bent forward. 'Do you wish to say more on this subject, uncle?'

'Yes,' came the reply at once.

The young man hesitated, hardly knowing how to proceed.

'Tell me what you wish,' he cried. 'I will repeat the alphabet again. Give the sign when you wish me to stop.'

His device was again successful. The first pause was at G. On recommencing he was stopped at E; and then he was allowed to run on until T was reached.

'G-e-t—get!' he cried in triumph. 'What am I to get? Is it the will?'

'Yes!'

He rose in his eagerness, and gripped the head-rail of the bed. The doctor's injunctions were forgotten. The will—only to see it!

'Where is it?' he asked. 'In Stapleton's hands? in your office? in your desk downstairs? No!'

His guesses were only a waste of time, and he stopped again. He must try the alphabet plan once more.

Once more it succeeded. The first word arrived at was *in*. The second was *my*.

'In your what?' cried Heigham. 'Now, uncle, once again! I will be very careful.'

He began slowly, restraining his excitement: A, B, C; but H was reached before the signal stayed him. The next letter needed was E, the next A. And the last, to his astonishment, was D!

'Head!' he muttered, bewildered. 'Head! In your head? Good Heavens, what do you mean? In your head?'

He was staring vacantly into the old man's face, and as the last words passed his lips, the affirmative sign was made once more, quite unmistakably.

'In your head?' he repeated again, hardly believing his senses.

The mute eyes were watching him closely, and appeared to take note of every shade of expression that flitted across his troubled face. And suddenly he saw, or thought he saw, a passing gleam in their depths—a transient gleam that looked like mockery or mirth.

The blood rushed to his brows. His conscience quickened his suspicions, and the conviction came upon him that the helpless man he had deceived for six years knew him for what he was—a hypocrite and a time-server. His ready fears saw in those watchful eyes a late sparkle of that mocking spirit he knew so well. The old man had found him out after all! His devices had been in vain, his pretended reform, his false humility, his clever drudgery. Christopher Colbeck had fought him with his own weapons, and had deceived the deceiver.

In a storm of rage and mortification he shook his clenched hand above the dying man.

'So!' he cried, 'you know me! You saw my game! You—you—'

He stammered and fumed, but could not speak for passion. In his blindness he did not see the fear and wonder which had taken the place of that mocking light in his uncle's eyes. What he did see was a shrinking and covering as of terror, and he rejoiced in that. Then he turned to the table and snatched up the paper which he had laid there. Here was a small revenge, and triumph gave him words.

'You have used me and worked me to the last,' he hissed, 'and you knew me all the time! And I came here, like a fool, to beg, to find out—to plead for myself at the last moment. Like a fool, sir, like a fool! So you thought to cripple the business by getting me to write this? Uncle, you were clever!'

The paper trembled and rustled in his hands. He looked at it and laughed.

'Very clever!' he repeated bitterly. 'But you were too quick. You should have waited. Now—'

He tore the paper twice across. Then he threw the pieces into the fire, standing aside so that his victim should see them burn. And Christopher Colbeck watched his last act shrivel and vanish in the flames.

'I have the business,' said Robert Heigham quietly, 'I have the business! I deserve that, at least. And I have Fernley's deeds. He was your friend, and you thought to save him. Let me tell you then that I will ruin him in a month. That is the beginning of it!'

Stepping back to the bed, he looked down into the eyes which had told him so much. He thought to see anger, rage, and vengeance in

them, and the sight would have gladdened him. But what he did see caused the malice to fade from his face before a sudden waking look of doubt and surprise.

Christopher Colbeck's eyes spoke anger indeed, and pain, but these had small place compared with the light of triumph and exultation which seemed to fill them. What did it mean?

But before Heigham could speak or think, he saw an awful change pass over the lifeless features. The interview was over!

He threw open the door and rushed to the stair-rail.

'Doctor, doctor!' he shouted. 'Come up—come up at once!'

There was a sound of footsteps below as the medical men hastened to the stairs. They were already too late!

THE EDUCATION OF JOHN BULL, JUNIOR.

By ERNEST PROTHEROE.

WHEN her Majesty the Queen came to the throne in 1837 the State was only just awaking to its plain duty in the matter of education, and less than £20,000 per annum was doled out to the various voluntary agencies who were attempting to bring light to the thousands sitting in appalling darkness. Official information respecting dame-schools is afforded us as far back as the Queen's accession, about which time a select committee of the House of Commons was considering 'the best means of providing useful education for the children of the poorer classes in large towns.' A description of a dame-school by one of the witnesses approaches the incredible:

'On a perch, forming a triangle with the corner of the room, sat a cock and two hens; under a stump bed immediately beneath was a dog-kennel in the occupation of three black terriers, whose barking, added to the noise of the children and the cackling of the fowls on the approach of a stranger, were almost deafening; there was only one small window, at which sat the teacher, obstructing three-fourths of the light it was capable of admitting.'

The Education Act of 1870 was viewed with considerable suspicion in certain quarters, for compulsory attendance at school was deemed somewhat irreconcilable with the popular idea of the freedom of the subject. After a lapse of twenty-seven years it still frequently requires the critical attention of a school-attendance officer and one of her Majesty's Justices of the Peace to eliminate or modify the opinion that a person still possesses the incontestable right to bring up children in ignorance.

For some time utterly false notions of respectability allowed the dame-schools to struggle on in more or less unsatisfactory competition with the new order of things, but the modern tendency speedily evinced a growing desire for more promising qualifications for imparting knowledge than 'a cracked piano and a couple of mouldy

globes, with a brass plate on the door inscribed with the words, "Juvenile Academy."

Six years after the passing of the act there were less than two million scholars in the schools of England and Wales, in the charge of some twenty-six thousand men and women teachers, while now over ninety thousand 'captains and guides' marshal a daily school population of no less than four and a half millions. That of the increased teachers quite two-thirds are women affords proof of the field of labour opened up for women-workers. During the same period it says much for the quality of the teaching that girl pupil-teachers have increased by only seven thousand, while the boy-teachers have decreased by over three thousand. Touching the attendance of scholars, it is interesting to note that every half-day the absentees number three-quarters of a million, a forcible testimony to the exigencies of washing-day and the omnipresent baby.

The elaborate returns respecting attendance now required from teachers would be a revelation to the worthy mistress who had 'conscientious scruples' against counting her scholars, saying, 'You shan't catch me counting. See what a pretty mess David made of it when he counted the children of Israel.'

It is most difficult for an unstatistical mind to grasp the possibilities of such huge totals. Gather all the school children together, and they will occupy the whole surface of Hyde Park. Now dress up in close order four abreast, and set them marching due north at the continuous rate of four miles an hour. Forty-eight hours later the moving column of juvenile humanity will extend from Marble Arch to York, a distance of one hundred and eighty-eight miles, and still leave sufficient children in the Park to form the total combined populations of Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham. Probably, however, his ever-increasing School Board rate is a sufficiently striking demonstration to the mind of the ordinary individual of the growth of young John Bull's educational requirements.

The iron hand of the Education Code lays down the main lines on which work in all elementary schools shall be carried on, and there is in consequence an astonishing uniformity in method and organisation generally.

The 'three R's,' with needlework for girls and drawing for boys, are absolutely obligatory subjects in every school, and even the worst aim at more than this somewhat limited curriculum. The Education Department approves and pays grants in respect of a multiplicity of subjects, from languages and physics to laundry-work and cottage-gardening; for our educational legislators are not in sympathy with the choleric old squire who recently told the rector of his parish he did not see that a working-man's child need be taught more than 'to fear God, to honour the Queen, and touch his hat to a gentleman,' and which at any rate is a distinct advance on the statement of a schoolmaster in 1837 that he could 'not afford to teach morals at twopence per week.'

In passing, we gather that when a boy has received twenty hours' practical instruction in cottage-gardening, the Department pays to the school managers the munificent sum of two shillings. What more convincing proof that agricultural depression is a stern reality when it

invades even the stately precincts of exclusive Whitehall!

There is scarcely a doubt that infant schools, where are congregated the happiest and most responsive scholars, are the most attractive to the casual visitor. Here, from the very commencement, 'Play and learn' is the motto, and Froebel and Pestalozzi would offer up pæans of praise could they but see the more than realisation of their life's work.

Kindergarten occupations form a veritable Tom Tiddler's ground, which opens up a vista of delight to many a little mite whose home surroundings preclude anything that savours of pleasure and enjoyment. Many parents, who pay heavily for the private tuition of their children, would be surprised to see the very successful efforts of children of five and six years of age in clay modelling, drawing and colouring, paper-folding, wirework, weaving, embroidery, and a hundred and one similar useful occupations which form the foundation of hand and eye training, so necessary to success in after-life.

The 'baby-room' of many of our larger schools is practically a day-nursery. Compulsory attendance does not apply to children under five years of age, but many are sent as early as three, and poor women-workers are glad to avail themselves of a safe refuge of this description; for while the mother is engaged in the factory or elsewhere, she is comforted to know her little ones are sheltered amidst pleasant, healthy surroundings, and already planting their little feet on Parnassus' slope.

Girls' schools now very largely concern themselves in teaching domestic economy and cookery, the value of which to the girls in after-life needs no demonstration. Ladies whose cooks frequently evince most primitive and original notions of culinary routine would view with envy the smartness with which girls of twelve and thirteen concoct most tasty dishes. This development of female education may in later years do much to solve the domestic servant problem.

Technical education is progressing by leaps and bounds, and many boys' schools have fully-equipped manual departments, in which hand and eye receive a scientific training. Articles of excellent finish in wood, iron, and cardboard are turned out by mere children, and the benefit to the individual and to the general community must be of considerable value; in fact, many firmly believe that technical and manual instruction is the only real antidote to foreign competition. Many of the technical schools are in touch with the manufacturers of their immediate district, and the lad 'of pregnant parts' is drafted off to a situation where his natural bent will find plenty of scope for enlargement.

The Evening Continuation School is making steady progress, but until attendance is compulsory we have still much to learn from some of our Continental neighbours. In 1890 there was an average attendance of 43,000, which in 1896 had risen to 147,000. Scholars of all ages are found in the evening schools, and an instance is quoted of a grandfather and grandson sitting together in the same class. An inspector reports that during one of his visits to a school, he found a middle-aged man struggling bravely with a sum in compound long division. The pounds he could

divide, but the 'remainder' was a mystery that defied solution. To the inspector, who endeavoured to explain the puzzle, the man opened his heart. 'I have a boy,' he said, 'in the fifth standard, and he can do all these things. He thinks I can, but I can't, and I shouldn't like for him to know it.'

One of the most gratifying features in connection with educational progress is the manner in which our large educational bodies cater for the needs of the afflicted. Children deprived of the boon of light are transferred to institutions where, we are told, 'their lives begin to brighten from the day of admission.' They are taught to read by touch from books embossed with the Braille type. Boys are taught various handicrafts, as basket-work, piano-tuning, &c.; and girls are instructed in sewing, knitting, and cooking. As an instance of what may be done, we have seen a blind girl typewriting a letter which had been dictated into a phonograph. Very successful efforts are also made to lighten the heavy burdens inherited by the deaf and dumb; and though it is impossible for any sound of voice or music to reach their brains, this is no bar to the cultivation of their intelligence.

A quarter of a century is but a short period in the history of a nation, yet a vast change, amounting almost to a revolution, has taken place, and we have already commenced to reap the deeper benefits which it might be expected more general education would confer. One of her Majesty's Inspectors recently said: 'Any one who can compare the demeanour of our young people at the present day with what it was five-and-twenty years ago must notice how roughness of manner has been smoothed away, how readily and intelligibly they can answer a question, how the half-hostile suspicion with which they regarded a stranger has disappeared; in fact, how they have become civilised.'

We may, however, go further than this and place a remarkable diminution of crime to the credit of the Children's Educational Charter. In 1870 there were one hundred and thirteen jails in England and Wales, with an average daily population of over thirty thousand, while now there are less than sixty jails, with a daily population of less than twenty thousand; and this, too, in face of a large increase in the population of the country. It is strikingly significant that the greatest decrease in crime relates to persons under thirty years of age, or just those who have experienced the benefits of compulsory education. Typical of the work our elementary schools are doing, and a striking instance of the whirligig of time, is the fact that the site of Clerkenwell Prison, which stood for centuries a festering hotbed of suppressed crime, is now occupied by one of the foremost of London Board schools. For every three pounds spent in education the country disburses two pounds for the suppression of crime, which still leaves a vast field of labour for 'Saint School' to compass.

Towards the necessary annual sinews of war for making battle against ignorance and vice, the Government provides eleven million pounds, the local rates yield nearly four millions more, while voluntary subscribers dip their hands into their pockets to the tune of £750,000. The annual

bill for national education is certainly heavy, but it is an investment bearing highly satisfactory dividends of light and happiness, peace and prosperity.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

By FRED WHISHAW.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE *pristaf* or chief of police of the district in which Philipof lived was awaiting the arrival of the latter quite anxiously. He had before him two documents; one was the dead student's attestation of Philipof's innocence of the crime for which he had been so long a prisoner within the fortress; the other was the report of the Third Section upon the affair of the previous evening. Philipof had, of course, been recognised, and the report made much of the part taken by him in the rescue of the delinquents.

'First of all, read that,' said the chief to Philipof as soon as Sasha had arrived and had been ushered into the sanctum, much to his surprise, for the outer office had been the best accommodation afforded him hitherto. 'Read that, and tell me what you know of the matter.'

Philipof read the absurdly worded document, the confession of Nicholas Smirnof, and in spite of the importance to him of the contents could not resist a feeling of amused disgust with the manner of expressing himself adopted by the vain little Nihilist. He laid it down, however, with heightened colour and heart beating quickly with undefined sensations of hope. It would be pleasant to be vindicated, at any rate, even though the manner of his vindication were obnoxious.

'It is a foolishly written document,' he said; 'but the man has told the truth, though late in the day.'

'You were acquainted with the author of the document?'

'Only as a fellow-prisoner at the fortress.'

'And since the day of your release?'

'I have had no communication with him at all.'

'Until last night, that is. According to the report before me, you were concerned with him and a third party in the struggle during which this man received his death-wound?'

'I certainly was present during a portion of that struggle,' said Philipof, 'but my presence was accidental. I went to the assistance of two whom I found being attacked by three; any man would defend the weaker party from assault. How was I to know the assailants were not robbers?'

'So that your contention is that you went to the assistance of two persons who were attacked, and that you then discovered these to be acquaintances?'

'I had seen one of them before—not the other.'

'The student, Nicholas Smirnof?'

'Yes; I had reason to know him, since it was due to his mis-statements that I passed several years in the fortress-prison.'

'This Smirnof is dead, you are aware, and the other has disappeared.'

'This is my first intimation of it.'

'Oh—well; and about the lady?'

'What lady?'

'She whom you assisted to escape from the hands of justice?'

'Yes—well, I never saw her until last night.'

'So? and what became of her after Smirnof was wounded and left in the doctor's hands? It is known that you accompanied her as far as the house of the doctor, Kirilof. What became of her afterwards?'

'That is her secret.'

'And yours?'

'Yes, and mine.'

'Which you refuse to reveal?'

'Which I refuse to reveal.'

'Oh, oh, Gospodin Philipof! the Department has methods of discovering the secrets of those who are obstinate!'

Philipof flushed hotly. They would never dare to lay hands upon him—the *knot* was surely not for such as he! The pristaf observed his flushed face, and pressed the advantage which he imagined he had gained.

'The *knot* is a wonderful opener of the lips!' he added.

'You dare not lay a finger upon me, pristaf, and you know it well. You dare not withhold that document you have before you from the Emperor's eye. The Emperor will instantly admit its truth, which you also recognise, in spite of your hints that the author was my accomplice. When the Emperor has admitted the authenticity of Smirnof's act of attestation, he will reinstate me in my rank and position, and perhaps load me with favours; in a few days I shall be recognised as the preserver of the Tsar's life, and, as such, shall have the ear of the Tsar. I dare you to lay a finger upon me!'

The pristaf was quite unused to the game of bluff, and Philipof's bold and defiant attitude impressed him. It was certainly true that if the Tsar were to recognise this man as the ill-used preserver of his life, and to take it into his imperial head to load him with honours and dignities, he would be an extremely awkward person to have for an enemy. It was *not* safe to subject him to examination by *knot* at present, and the pristaf wished he had said nothing about it.

'Well, well,' he said weakly, 'I am loth to proceed to extreme measures with you, and we shall see what can be done in the matter of discovering the missing lady without your aid. I warn you, however, that the question may be raised between us again later, when I trust you will be ready to give us the information we require—without pressure!'

'And I repeat to you, pristaf, for my part, that you shall do your own hunting; I am neither conspirator nor detective. I shall await the judgment of the Tsar with confidence; he is said to be a just man when he is able to discern the truth.'

With these words Philipof bowed to the pristaf and left the room, leaving that official very considerably astonished. He had never been treated in this way by an 'arrested suspect,' and the sensation was peculiar. The man's confidence was convincing. What if he were indeed the fortunate preserver of the Tsar's life! Good heavens, what a position his would be! The pristaf was half convinced by his very fears that Philipof was verily and indeed that which he represented himself to be; he was afraid of him. Accordingly,

when the suspect passed out of the chief's sanctum and made as though he would depart from the main entrance to the building, the pristaf signed to the gendarmes who kept the door to allow him to go. He had not had the faintest intention to allow him to depart when first Philipof had been brought in; it was a victory for Sasha all down the line.

Nevertheless an attendant from the Third Section was told off to shadow Philipof unceasingly for a week, and when the latter passed down the street the detective was already after him.

Then the pristaf sat down and made his report upon the whole affair, pinning a copy of his precious composition to the attestation of the student, and endorsing the latter document with the remark that the *bona fides* of the since deceased author of the vindication of Philipof was at least doubtful, since the said Philipof was quite evidently an accomplice of Smirnof, the writer of it, whom, together with a woman, he had on the previous evening endeavoured to rescue from the hands of the police. Smirnof was notoriously a bad character, and the statement made by him of his own guilt and of the innocence of his accomplice was an impudent attempt to preserve his friend from the consequences of his latest quarrel with the police.

When the pristaf had thus endorsed poor Smirnof's cherished act of justice, he considered that he had done a good day's work. He had no wish to see Philipof—the suspect whom he had browbeaten and insulted times unnumbered—raised to power and honour; and so the act went forward together with the pristaf's report, and in due course both were placed in the hands of the Tsar.

Meanwhile Philipof was shadowed by the agent of the Third Section. This official weasel was never far away from his prey during the course of the week appointed to him for his duty. He would follow his charge daily to the grain wharves, and watch him at his work all day—sometimes as a drunken labourer lying fast asleep beneath the shade of a grain warehouse; sometimes as a respectably dressed clerk, busily employed with note-book and pencil in taking down names and numbers of lighters; sometimes he was a beggar, and stood about at the corners of the wharf, but always with an eye upon Philipof and his proceedings. Then, at evening, he would follow him home or elsewhere, and watch half the night at the gate of his house. When Philipof on one occasion visited his little nephew and niece (to the mingled delight and terror of poor Matriona and Katia, who had received the strictest injunctions to refuse him admittance), the detective made a note of it; and the pristaf, when he heard that this suspect had visited the house of the Tsar's prime favourite, nearly had a fit of the horrors in consequence, for he believed that here indeed lay the first step towards the Tsar's recognition and favour—namely, in a summons to the aide-de-camp.

During that week the wind ran high from the west, and the barge which was Doonya's sanctuary was fortunately detained at Cronstadt. This was indeed a happy chance, for had No. 15 arrived at the wharf during the presence there of the detective, Doonya would undoubtedly have been

discovered. As it happened, the official from Section III. was obliged to report that, so far as the woman known as Doonya Rachmatof was concerned, there were no signs of her, and it was certain that the suspect Philipof had had no communication whatever with her during his week of office.

As for Doonya herself, she was all this while in the seventh heaven of delight. She felt free as air; she revelled in a sense of security such as she had not experienced for long years. The atmosphere of political discontent in which she had lived ever since she had first drifted into close connection with the revolutionary society to which she belonged had long been slowly poisoning her young life. Doonya's political opinions were inherited; she had no strongly developed revolutionary passions of her own; circumstances had led her into the camp of the Discontented, but she did not greatly love either the cause or the forces to which she was allied. Of late her position had grown actively and acutely dangerous. Philipof had appeared, like Perseus, in the nick of time to save her from the dragon of 'examination,' with all its horrors. On him she still leaned for safety, and in him she felt a sense of protection which was new to her and delightful. She longed to return to St Petersburg in order to see her Perseus once again, but her sojourn upon the barge was not unpleasant. It was close and hot below, no doubt; but in the evenings Doonya would walk for hours up and down the deck of her small ship and enjoy the delicious summer breezes that came up from the Gulf of Finland, and wonder whether her knight remembered his rescued maiden, and wished that the big English steamer would quickly discharge and release the lesser vessel, barge No. 15, and send it back to its superintendent. And in her lightness of heart Doonya laughed to think how nonplussed the police must be as to her whereabouts, and pictured them visiting her modest lodging and turning it upside down—which, indeed, they had done; but she never dreamed of the danger that threatened her should the barge be sent back within the week; for it is one of our least realised mercies that we do not discern the swords which hang over our heads!

CHAPTER XXIV.

Meanwhile 'the brotherhood' had been thrown into a condition of considerable alarm and agitation by the death of the student Colya and the disappearance of Doonya. It was feared at first that the police had succeeded in capturing the latter, in which case it was highly probable that the girl would, if subjected to 'examination,' reveal secrets which would place halters round the necks of many prominent members of the organisation. Kirilof, the doctor, had been the first to give the alarm. Early on the morning following the death of Colya he had sallied forth, as in duty bound, to impart the information he held; and first he sought the most important member of all—the president of the inner circle of that branch of the society of the Discontented to which both he and Colya belonged. Kirilof visited one or two patients in order to throw off the scent any possible bloodhound who might have been told off to watch his proceedings;

for the members of 'the brotherhood' were well aware that they were one and all the suspected of the police, and that it was necessary at all times to practise every precaution. As a matter of fact, Kirilof was frequently shadowed; but the official told off for this duty had so often found that he merely wasted time following this innocent medical man upon his professional rounds that he had lately adopted the practice of seeing him safely started upon his rounds, watching him into the houses of an unsuspected patient or two, and then returning to spend the day in the bosom of his family or possibly in his favourite drink-shop. He did so on this occasion, though specially instructed to keep a sharp look-out to-day in view of the known activity, at the present time, of the society to which the doctor was suspected of belonging. He shadowed Kirilof as far as the houses of his first and second patients, as to the *bona fides* of whose maladies he had accurately informed himself by pumping the yard-porter in each case; after which he had reflected that this shadowing of innocent people was a mere waste of time, and had gone where his time would not be wasted but devoted to the unalloyed enjoyment of vodka-sipping in the congenial atmosphere of his favourite 'tea-house.'

Kirilof's third, or perhaps fourth, visit was to the shop of a watch and clock maker in the *Konyushnaya*, or stable-street.

The watchmaker was a meek-looking little man in spectacles, who sat working at a watch behind the counter of his tiny shop. He was a tradesman in narrow circumstances, it appeared; for his stock-in-trade consisted of some half-dozen clocks and twenty or thirty watches, many of them taken to pieces, and each covered with a small glass case in order that the component parts should not get mixed with those of its neighbour. He had no assistant, but sat and worked alone from morning to night absorbed in his thoughts or in the skilful manipulation of the tiny wheels and springs which he repaired for his living. The watchmaker raised his eyes as Kirilof entered the shop, and slightly started.

'Am I ill this morning?' he asked.

'Yes,' said Kirilof, 'very ill; let me feel your pulse.' The old man obediently stretched his wrist over the counter, and Kirilof gravely went through the pantomime of feeling his pulse-beats.

'Well, what is the matter with me?' inquired the invalid after a moment.

'The student Nicholas Smirnof and the girl Doonya Rachmatof were attacked by thieves last night as they returned from, I suppose, the theatre. Nicholas was stabbed and died. I was by when he expired'—

'His death is nothing, rather good than bad,' interrupted the other quickly; 'but was anything said?'

'He sent a foolish letter to the Emperor'—

The old man started violently.

'Good God, doctor! what are you telling me?' he muttered hoarsely.

'To the Emperor,' continued Kirilof, 'in which he declared, among other things, that he belonged to no organisation, but had, on his own initiative, once acted—you know how—at the Summer Gardens. The little fool was anxious, it appears, to befriend one Philipof, whom he

rather cleverly accused on that occasion, and who was imprisoned with him.'

'I know the man,' said the watchmaker. 'I have my eye on him; he should suit us well. Then Smirnof gave nothing away?'

'He should not have done that in any case, Karaool; I was by, and should have known how to stop his fooling at any moment in spite of the notary and gendarme whom the idiot had called in.'

'Gendarme?' repeated Karaool, wincing again.

'Gendarme and notary both. Oh! he did the thing in style, I can tell you. But in this matter fortune favoured us. It is the rest of it that worries me—Doonya'—

'Yes, Doonya—go on,' said the other impatiently; 'what of Doonya? Do you dare to tell me she is taken, Kirilof!' Karaool trembled so that the watch he held slipped out of his hands and was broken on the counter.

'It appears that this same Philipof suddenly came upon the scene during the fight with the dogs—robbers—what were they?—and rescued Doonya from their clutches, wounding one or two of the assailants and driving all away.'

'Ah—ah—ah! and this was Philipof—already on our side? We shall have this Philipof, in exchange for Nicholas Smirnof, my son, and you will see it is a good exchange! I am not ill, Kirilof; you have made a great mistake, my friend. This Smirnof was a danger and a nuisance to us; I had a green ticket for him, all ready. See here.' The old man opened a drawer at his elbow and produced a small ticket coloured green bearing the number 47, but otherwise blank. Kirilof shivered.

'The bloodhounds have saved you trouble,' he said.

Karaool tore up the ticket. 'And Doonya—she escaped, of course, with this Philipof?' he continued. 'Do you know where they are?'

'That is the trouble,' said Kirilof. 'The police were alert last night, and my fear is that she may still have fallen into their hands.'

Karaool scowled and was silent for a moment.

'Probably not,' he said at last; 'not twice in a night; she would be very careful after her first escape. But no doubt they will be upon her track, and she is, from this time, dangerous.' Karaool drew from his drawer a blank green ticket and fingered it meditatively.

'No, no, no, Karaool!' said Kirilof, his face whitening; 'not that—not Doonya—at least let us wait a day or two; she may easily be in hiding, and will turn up in good time. This Philipof has charge of her. Besides, you have no right to issue green tickets without express authority from the circle.'

For reply Karaool took from his drawer a sheet of paper edged with a green line. Upon this sheet were written these words:

'At personal discretion of No. 1.—Nos. 47, 53, 19, 82.

Signed

Fourteen.
Thirty-three.
Twenty-seven.
Nine.
One.'

Kirilof understood the signification of this mysterious document, though probably the reader will not. It was a discretionary death-warrant for the members of 'the brotherhood'

who were known under the four numbers given, and was signed by the five members of the inner circle, each of whom wrote out his number in full within the circle which included the whole five.

'She is 19,' explained Karaool. 'But come, in deference to yourself, my son, I will wait. She shall, perhaps, have the choice of—employment. We will see her about it. You will visit her lodging and that of Smirnof, and any other places in which she may be concealed; you will inquire through the usual channels whether the bloodhounds have taken her or are upon her track. Lastly, you will take this watch, which I now set, and show it to four persons.'

'The four, I suppose,' said Kirilof mechanically, taking the watch from Karaool's hand. The watch was not going, but the big hand pointed to eleven and the small one to eight; and once more, since Kirilof understood the meaning of this symbolism and the reader does not, it may be explained that this watch was invariably used for the purpose of appointing the rendezvous for 'the brotherhood,' and that the large hand indicated the place or the number of the 'committee-room,' of which there were twelve in all, and the small hand revealed the appointed time. Thus on this occasion the inner circle were invited to meet at committee-room No. 11, at eight o'clock in the evening.

Kirilof took the watch and left the shop. Then he jumped into his droszky and set out upon his rounds, judiciously intermingling his visits to patients and 'suspects' in case of possible shadowers; though, to do that official justice, his shadower was, as a matter of fact, more wisely employed on that particular morning. He visited the lodging occupied by Doonya, and found that, though she had not been there (which was not unexpected), the police had called, and had sealed up her belongings, as well as the front-door of her apartment. The student's quarters were evidently still in the possession of the police, for as he approached the house Kirilof observed a gendarme on guard outside. He therefore drove by without stopping.

Each of the four members of the circle carefully noted the exact state of the watch presented for their inspection by Kirilof; but, excepting Karaool himself, not one of them asked any questions or made any remark to Kirilof upon those subjects so interesting to all as members of 'the brotherhood.' Lastly, the doctor returned the watch to its owner and delivered his report of the day's work, with which the powerful No. 1 condescended to express himself well satisfied.

THE FORFEITED ESTATES IN SCOTLAND.

THE method which historians have devised of treating history in periods is no doubt convenient both for writers and readers, but it has serious disadvantages. It encourages the fallacy that history consists of a succession of scenes and acts, making up a drama with a distinct beginning, middle, and end, wholly self-contained, and independent of contemporary dramas. We speak of 'the Queen Anne period' and 'the Victorian period' as if the latter were not the outcome of the former, totally oblivious of the fact that

evolution rules in history as in everything else in nature. Thus the Jacobite rising of 1715 is treated, historically, as though it were quite separate in character from the later episode of 1745. But the struggle of the Stuarts to regain the throne really began in 1688, when James II. fled—temporarily, as was expected—before the advance of William, Prince of Orange; and it continued with hopefulness, more or less ardent according to circumstances, until the death of Prince Charles Edward (Charles III.) in 1788. The rising in 1715, the invasion of Scotland and the battle of Glenshiel in 1719, and the brilliant expedition of Prince Charles in 1745, were all merely incidents in the great historic drama. Hence, in dealing with the Scottish Forfeited Estates, the episodes of 1715 and 1745 must be treated as parts of one continuous story, though popularly the notion of confiscation seems to be erroneously considered as relating only to the later episode. This branch of the subject has been very imperfectly described by historians of the period. In 1883 Dr David Murray of Glasgow published a very valuable little book, entitled *The York Buildings Company*, in which he traced the dealings of that company in purchasing several of the estates that had been forfeited for treason. The scope of his subject did not require that Dr Murray should discuss the history of any forfeited estates save those in which the York Buildings Company was concerned; and there is as yet no work upon this topic, though the Scottish History Society has a volume in preparation which will contain documents connected with some of the more important Scottish estates that were confiscated in 1746. Only the outlines of so vast a subject can be indicated in this article.

The death of Queen Anne, on 1st August 1714, left the succession to the Crown open to the descendants of Elizabeth, daughter of James I., then represented by the Elector of Hanover, and he was proclaimed King of Great Britain, with the title of George I. On 18th September the new king landed at Greenwich, and was welcomed by many of the noblemen who had supported the Protestant succession. Amongst them was John, eleventh Earl of Mar, who had been Secretary of State for Scotland in 1706, and who expected a similar office in the new government. In this hope he was disappointed. His rival, the Duke of Montrose, was placed in Mar's office, and the Earl was ignominiously dismissed. Mar returned to Scotland and drew around him the discontented Tory noblemen who still adhered to the cause of James II.; and in the following year the futile episode known as 'Mar's Rebellion' was begun, and was ended at Sheriffmuir.

Not content with a victory on the field of battle, George I. determined to put down rebellion with the strong hand. Accordingly, there were two Acts of Parliament passed in the first year of his reign (1 Geo. I. cc. 32 and 42), whereby those

concerned in the rebellion were attainted as traitors, and their estates forfeited to the Crown. But wisdom ruled even this apparently harsh measure; for it was provided that commissioners should be appointed 'to Enquire of the Estates of certain Traitors, and of Popish Recusants, and of Estates given to Superstitious Uses, in order to Raise Money out of them severally for the Use of the Publick.' Formerly it had been the custom to confiscate the estates of traitors to the Crown, so that the king might confer them upon some favourite. But by the method introduced by George I. the proceeds of these estates were to be utilised for the commonweal; and for nearly a century the money realised (after lawful claims and expenses had been paid) was expended upon the making of roads, bridges, and harbours in Scotland, to an extent not fully understood at the present day.

By the Acts of Parliament referred to, there were thirteen commissioners appointed, seven for England and six for Scotland. The latter consisted of four Englishmen and two Scotsmen, and the salary of each was fixed at £1000 per annum—a princely salary in those days, for it was exactly double that which was given to a Lord of Session. The Commissioners for Scotland were Sir Richard Steele, the friend of Addison, and one of the most brilliant of the men of letters in Queen Anne's days; Sir Henry Hoghton of Hoghton Tower, Lancaster, M.P. for Preston; Arthur Ingram; Richard Grantham; Patrick Haldane, a scion of the Haldanes of Gleneagles in Perthshire; and Sir Robert Munro of Fowlis. The two Scotsmen were not likely to command the confidence of their fellow-countrymen. Patrick Haldane was the second son of John Haldane of Gleneagles and of Mary Drummond, daughter of Lord Maderty. He was born in 1683, and was for some time a professor of History at St Andrews University, but took up the legal profession, passed advocate, and was 'King's Solicitor' in 1715. In that year he entered parliament as member for the St Andrews Burghs, and remained in the seat till 1722. He was proposed for a Lord of Session to succeed Lord Fountainhall; but so strong was the feeling against him that he never received the appointment. Charges of bribery and Jacobitism were freely brought against him, and he seems to have had the character of a trimmer. On the death of his elder brother, Mungo Haldane, in 1755, he succeeded to the estate of Gleneagles; and five years afterwards he sold it to his half-brother, Captain Robert Haldane. By a deed of entail, executed by Captain Haldane, the estate was confined to the heirs of his sisters, and thus Gleneagles has come into the possession of the present Earl of Camperdown. Patrick Haldane died on 10th January 1769, aged eighty-six. Sir Robert Munro, sixth baronet of Fowlis, was unquestionably a brave soldier, but he was not one likely to deal tenderly with the rebels against whom he had fought, nor was he skilled in legal affairs. He proved himself a dauntless hero at the battle of Fontenoy, and he fell on the field of Falkirk in 1746 when vainly attempting to resist the army of Prince Charles Edward. These were the men to whom the task was committed of realising the Scottish Forfeited Estates.

The Commissioners soon found that the duty

they had undertaken was not an easy one. In their first report, which was ordered by the House of Commons to be printed in July 1717, they detail in melancholy terms the serious obstacles that they had to encounter, and plaintively ask the House of Commons to direct them as to their procedure. Their first difficulty was with the Barons of the Exchequer. Under an earlier act than that by which the Commissioners were appointed, the Barons of Exchequer had issued writs against certain of the forfeited estates, had placed factors in charge, and had uplifted the rentals, utterly ignoring the existence of the Commissioners. Then the Lords of Session, having had petitions for sequestration presented to them by certain creditors, 'instigated, as your Lordships' Commissioners have reason to believe, by the Forfeiting Persons or their Friends,' had granted these petitions, and had appointed judicial factors who had power to distrain for these alleged debts. Thirdly, many of the tenants continued to pay their rents to the forfeited persons, in defiance of the act. Fourthly, the parish ministers maintained that as their stipends were largely paid out of these estates, they had a perpetual claim upon the rentals; and the Commissioners, unwilling to discourage the Presbyterians, who had adhered faithfully to his Majesty, knew not how to act. As to the estates for superstitious uses, which they were directed to seize, the Commissioners, after diligent inquiry, could find no such estates in Scotland. Indeed, the whole of this report is taken up with complaints that the Commissioners were obstructed in every way, and were threatened with tedious litigation before they could put in force the act by which they were constituted. The most serious difficulty of all was that as a large proportion of the rentals was paid in grain; they had no means of realising the forfeited estates at all without appointing factors for these estates who would convert the grain into money to be paid into the Exchequer. The Commissioners ordered surveys to be made of all the estates, and the documents connected with this survey are now preserved in the Register House, Edinburgh, portions being printed in the appendix to the first report. As an illustration of the strange way in which farmers paid their rents at the beginning of last century, one of these abstracts may here be given:

ABSTRACT of the RENTAL of the REAL ESTATE of
JAMES, late EARL OF PANMURE.

Money—Rent payable in money.....	£1,843	17	11½
Wheat—243 bolls 1 furlet 2 pecks at 6s. 11½d. per boll.....	84	10	3½
Barley—2013 bolls 1 furlet 2 pecks at 6s. 11½d. per boll.....	699	1	10
Oatmeal—2203 bolls 2 furlets 3½ pecks at 6s. 11½d. per boll.....	765	3	7½
Oats and Pease—110 bolls 1 furlet 3 pecks at 6s. 11½d.....	38	6	11½
Geese—8 at 1s. each.....	0	8	0
Capons—458 at 6d. each.....	11	9	0
Chickens—456 at 1½d. each.....	2	17	0
Hens—312½ at 3d. each.....	3	18	1½
Ells Linen—60½ at 6½d. per ell.....	1	13	7½
Wethers—14 at 3s. 4d. per wether.....	2	6	8
Butter—7 lb. at 3d. per lb.....	0	1	9

£3,456 11 10½

To convert such a miscellaneous rent-roll as this into current coin of the realm was not a very easy

task, and hardly the kind of work that would be congenial to a literary man like Sir Richard Steele or a soldier like Sir Robert Munro, and they were thus very much at the mercy of their factors. Before the Commissioners gave in their first report, they had surveyed thirty-eight of the forfeited estates, and they give an account of the sums which they expected to realise from the annual rentals.

SUM of the ABSTRACTS of FORFEITED ESTATES, 1717.*

1. George, Earl of Wintoun.....	£3,393	0	11½
2. James, Earl of Southesk.....	3,271	10	2½
3. James, Earl of Linlithgow.....	1,296	4	4½
4. James Stirling of Keir.....	907	19	1½
5. James, Earl of Panmure.....	3,456	11	10½
6. George Home of Wedderburn.....	213	0	10½
7. James Home of Aytoun.....	323	10	5½
8. William, Viscount of Kilsyth.....	864	19	7½
9. Sir Hugh Paterson of Bannockburn.....	411	14	9½
10. Robert Craw of East Reston.....	137	9	10½
11. John, Earl of Mar.....	1,678	5	8½
12. John Stewart of Invernie.....	361	12	1½
13. Major-General Gordon of Auchintowl.....	347	6	5
14. Robert Rollo of Powhouse.....	377	9	6½
15. George Mackenzie of Nuttill.....	72	17	10½
16. James Scrymgeour of Bowhill.....	27	14	7½
17. Patrick Seaton of Lathrisk.....	208	3	9
18. William Douglas of Glenbervy.....	75	12	10
19. Sir John Preston of Prestonhall.....	230	17	11½
20. Alexander Menzies of Woodend.....	83	6	4
21. Colonel John Balfour of Fairnie.....	153	8	7½
22. Master of Nairne.....	60	9	3½
23. Major Henry Balfour of Dunbog.....	170	6	6½
24. Earl Marischal.....	1,676	6	0½
25. John Carstairs of Kinnearchar.....	287	8	9½
26. Lord Nairne.....	740	10	3½
27. Sir David Thriepland of Fingask.....	537	19	2½
28. John Hay of Cromlix.....	415	0	4
29. William, Earl of Nithsdale.....	809	19	7½
30. Alexander Farquharson of Inverey.....	281	11	1½
31. William, Viscount Kenmure.....	608	10	9½
32. James, Lord Drummond.....	2,566	19	6½
33. Robert, Lord Burleigh.....	697	10	7½
34. John Walkinshaw of Scotstoun.....	110	5	3
35. William Graham of Duntroon.....	54	4	9½
36. William Grier of Lagg.....	424	15	0
37. Robert, Earl of Carnwath.....	864	8	11
38. Basil Hamilton of Baldoon.....	1,495	12	10½

£29,694 6 8

Had it been possible for the Commissioners to have realised from these thirty-eight estates an income of about £30,000 per annum, the civilisation of Scotland by the making of roads and bridges might have proceeded apace. But on every hand they were thwarted. The factors appointed by the Court of Session, in many cases, were near relatives of the traitors; and the sums which looked so large on paper were really like the elements of a Barmecide feast. The Commissioners themselves were very unpopular, and the gentle Sir Richard Steele, feeling uncomfortable in his position, was glad to escape from it. Yet they proceeded with their task, and in 1719 their second report contained the details of an additional survey of other thirty-eight estates, showing an estimated total of £10,459. These estates ranged in value from £11 per annum (the declared rental of Alexander Macdonald of Glenes) to £2350 (the rental of William, Earl of Seaforth).

* Dr David Murray prints an Abstract from the MS. Report in the Register House. The above figures are taken from the printed Report presented to parliament. The sums do not differ, though the details vary a little. The extensions and summations are not strictly accurate.

Towards the close of 1719 the Commissioners began the sale of the forfeited estates by auction. The York Buildings Company, which had been originally founded in 1679 for the purpose of supplying London with water, had gradually extended its financial operations; and when the Government was almost in despair regarding the forfeited estates, this company came to the rescue. The financiers of the company saw a brilliant opening for the employment of their capital by purchasing these estates; and they became the chief bidders at the auction. With capital that was practically unlimited, the agents of the company carried all before them. Even the friends of the forfeited persons, who were anxious to buy back the family estates, could not compete with this gigantic company. The following table of purchases gives an idea of the operations of the York Buildings Company at this historical crisis:

1719.	Estate.	Price.	
	Panmure.....	£60,400	0 0
	Kilsyth.....	16,000	0 0
	Winton.....	50,300	0 0
	East Renton.....	2,364	13 9
1720.			£129,064 13 9
	Marischal.....	£41,172	6 9
	Southesk.....	51,549	7 4
	Linlithgow.....	18,751	15 0
	Fingask.....	9,606	6 4
	Piteairn.....	849	5 3
			121,929 0 8
	Rob Roy.....		820 0 0
	Widdrington.....		57,100 0 0
			£308,913 14 5

The net rental of these estates, after various deductions, amounted to £15,378, 7s. 3d. The York Buildings Company took over the whole risk of the stupendous scheme, and the shareholders were practically the possessors of the largest portion of Scotland. The troubles which they endured do not concern us at present; and any one who wishes to know what became of the company will find its variegated fortunes fully detailed in Dr Murray's book.

In October 1720 the Commissioners had still thirty estates to dispose of. Within the next three years they got rid of nineteen of these for the sum of £66,236. The Earl of Mar's estates in the shires of Clackmannan, Stirling, and Aberdeen were purchased afterwards by his brother, Lord Grange, one of the Senators of the College of Justice, for £36,000. From the financial statements of the Commissioners, it appears that, by March 1725, they had paid into the Exchequer £411,082. From this sum there had to be deducted the claims on the estates for debts, and the grants made by the Crown; and these left a net balance of £84,043, besides the expenses of the Commission. These expenses came to £82,936 spread over the nine years that the Commissioners had been in office. Thus the actual outcome of all this labour and vexation, the net sum to be applied 'for the Use of the Publick,' was £1107. True, they had not then got possession of the estates of the Earl of Seaforth, for he had put them to defiance, and they could not find any one courageous enough to oust him, so they had to put the value of his estates down to the profit and loss account. But, after all, it was a miserable result for years of labour and unpopularity;

and the accounts had hardly been squared off when the rebellion broke forth anew in 1745. The estates forfeited after that incident were of more profit to the nation.

IN THE TRACK OF THE FORTY-POUNDERS.

By WALTER WOOD.

I WAS on the Lighthouse Pier when Chesney took a boat and prepared to pull a mile away to the north of Castle Hill for some fishing. The craft was a worn-out coble, which, being unfit to battle with the seas in the ordinary course of things, was permitted by an enlightened corporation to ferry a dozen persons each trip between the heads of two piers which formed the outer harbour at the foot of the hill.

An aged mariner undertook to row Chesney out and half-fill the boat with fish at the low inclusive charge of eighteenpence.

'Yer can sell the catch for twice the money, sir,' observed the fisherman persuasively. That decided Chesney, who is of Scotch descent and engaged in commerce.

'Then you'll owe me eighteenpence,' he answered, as he stepped into the coble.

The battered seaman winked expressively at me, and observed in husky tones of admiration that it was the smartest joke he'd heard this side of Christmas, and he'd come across most that were going.

Chesney is rather proud of his humour, and this remark was good for a cigar on the spot for the mariner and a mental resolve on Chesney's part—as I heard afterwards—to give him half-a-crown, and let him take the fish home for his own family consumption. The half-crown, for reasons which will presently appear, was not paid.

The boatman lazily pulled Chesney away, puffing great clouds of smoke from the cigar, which he was obviously getting through as speedily as possible, so that he might be ready for another. I watched them as they left the pier, and envied the elegance and self-possession of my friend. He also was smoking, and was reclining easily in the sternsheets as the coble rose and fell upon the crisp blue waves.

The sun was shining brightly then, and the air was so clear and fresh that I could count fifty steam and sailing craft of all sizes and rigs, some going north, others south, and a few, which were tacking, proceeding any way that would secure them a knot forward on their voyages.

The coble disappeared round the foot of the hill, and Chesney gave me a gracious and pitying wave of the hand, for I am of a timorous and unadventurous nature. In addition, I am a student of the weather forecasts, and so I had refused to accompany him, saying that before noon the sea-fog would be upon us, and that it behoved all prudent men to hug the shore very closely.

Chesney went away in a blaze of sunshine and a cloud of blue cigar smoke, in the company of the aged seaman, and with one knickerbockered leg dangling carelessly over the gunwale. This, I

believe, was done more for the benefit of several pretty girls upon the pier than for mine.

The coble and the mariner returned without him, and the latter reported to me and others, as he landed, that a thick fog had come down suddenly, that wind and sea had risen without warning; that Chesney, in leaning out of the boat to pull in the last bite, which he declined to forego, had been lurched overboard; that the anchor was then up and the coble under way, and that it was impossible to do anything to save him, inasmuch as the boat had shot past the spot, and one could not see half-a-dozen yards ahead.

'As for my gettin' back,' explained the fisherman, 'I came in mostly wi' the wind an' tide. But for them I should ha' bin wi' the Scotchman.'

Late that afternoon I lifted a limp, unclothed heap of humanity, which was Chesney, into a cab, after dexterously casting my waterproof around him, and we drove to our hotel. My friend was put into warm blankets, his knickers being hung up in the kitchen to dry, and until nightfall I employed myself, under medical direction, in gently pounding and strongly rubbing him to keep his circulation up, and in feeding him with watered brandy to keep his rheumatism down.

Chesney's first sign of returning intelligence was made when he observed, addressing no one in particular, that the aged seaman was a sham and a coward, emphasising his description with an energetic adjective which I must ask to be excused from mentioning.

'And now,' I said, when I was tired with my exertions, and all the spirit was finished, 'tell me how the whole thing happened. It strikes me as being wonderfully mixed up.'

'Well,' began Chesney, 'you may talk as you like about proficiency in shooting; but, for my part, give me soldiers that don't know how to aim.'

He turned himself in his blankets, and looked hard at me.

'No,' he proceeded, cleverly reading my thoughts, 'I'm not affected by what I've had—there's not enough of it, for one thing—and I'm not going mad. I'm telling you a simple fact when I say that if those fellows on Castle Hill had been good shots I should have been blown into a thousand pieces by this time. Then it would have been a case of Casabianca over again—asking of the winds which far around with fragments strewed the sea. You know that when I left you this morning those volunteer artillery fellows were potting away with the forty-pounders from the top of the hill. They have three targets rigged up a thousand yards out to sea, the targets being large casks placed upright on anchored rafts, and each having a flag on a pole to show its position to the gunners.'

'Well, the hill is two hundred feet above the level of the water, so that it's safe enough to sail beneath the shot as they scream through the air. It's quite thrilling and interesting to be rowed about and watch the men at practice. You see the flash and the smoke, and if you're reasonably sharp you can follow the projectiles as they whiz along. Very often the shot goes in plump, and raises a tall, thin column of spray, and that's all

you see of it; but frequently it goes ricochetting for a long distance, and this morning I saw one that ricochetted twenty times.

'When the skippers of the sixpenny excursion steamers want to let the trippers have their money's worth, they run very near the zone of fire. That usually knocks the passengers over, even if the sea doesn't. You've never been out in one of the steamers, I know. They're a bit too cosmopolitan for you, aren't they? But you must remember that you can always preserve your self-respect and gentility by going on the bridge—sixpence extra, and cheap at the price.

'Well, it's a pity you haven't made a trip or two, because you'd understand better what I'm going to tell you. For my own part, I've been out dozens of times, and paid my sixpence. There's no false pride about me. I'm not above mingling with the people, and sharing their joys and sorrows. I'm one of 'em.'

It pleases Chesney to talk like this in private. All the same, he wears a ring with a crest, for which, however, I don't know that he pays the tax; and claims to be descended from Lord Mac-Taggart, of the Isles.

'I have already described my coble man in fitting terms. As he rowed out he tried to persuade me that he'd seen every land on the face of the earth, but I don't suppose he ever got farther than the Dutch coast with the fishing fleets. That part of the world he certainly does know well, and speaks fluently of "Tarskillin," Ameland Island, the Texel, and other spots abroad where he's put in a lot of time—mostly, I dare say, for illegal trawling. He was a fraud of the first water, and ran through my cigars in a way I could never have believed possible if I hadn't seen it done. He seemed to turn them into smoke at a single draw, and didn't hesitate to ask for more, either.

'When we got half-a-mile out—you remember what a lovely morning it was—he stopped pulling, laid down his oars, and threw the anchor out. Then he tried to persuade me that the most perfect manner of enjoying my time was not to fish, but to lie on my back and smoke, and conjure up visions of what the hill was like in the old fighting days, and picture to myself the battles which have been determined hereabouts since the Armada. He's not an unromantic or unpicturesque old villain; but I'd gone out to fish, and fish I was determined on, even at the cost of putting the old gentleman to the trouble of baiting my hooks and looking after my lines.

'For half-an-hour I caught nothing, and even the ancient mariner had to confess that there wasn't much "sport," as he fondly called it. That, he explained, was due to the bright morning and the uncommon wariness of the fish. He tried to show me that since his young days fish have changed very much for the worse; for, whereas then they would go accommodately into any apology for a net, nowadays they know the cut of a trawl or line a mile away, and manœuvre out of reach accordingly. As for patent trawl-heads, they scent them from afar, and won't go near them.

'"It's all eddication 'at does it," he assured me. "If it wasn't for eddication there'd be no steam

trawlers, an' if it wasn't for steam trawlers the fish wouldn't be so 'cute. Becoss, you see, it's this way—if a calm came on in the old days o' sailin' smacks only, an' lasted for a week or two, the fish ud forget what a net was like; but wi' steamers, wi' their gear allus down, 'ceptin' in 'eavy weather, the image o' the net is never out o' their minds, an' so they're rare an' cunnin'."

'Specious old arguer,' I observed.

'Natural product of a fashionable seaside resort,' returned Chesney. 'The curse of modern civilisation is that it affects the inborn simplicity of these people, and makes them precocious and over-cunning, so to speak. That comes of tampering with the masses.'

'Of whom you're one!'

Chesney scorned to notice the correcting interruption, and with a power of forgetting disagreeable positions previously taken up by him, which I have sought in vain to emulate, he went on with his story.

'All the time we were fishing we were underneath the direct tracks of the forty-pounders from the hill. You know how the guns are placed? They're all forty-pounder R.B.L. or R.M.L.—that is to say, rifled breech-loaders or rifled muzzle-loaders.'

Having glanced with pity for my ignorance as he made this explanation, Chesney proceeded, 'It's the breech-loaders that are mostly used in the way of practice. The gunners never seem to hit anything, at least I never saw the target struck, and I've spent many hours on the hill in the rear of the weapons, sometimes half-afraid that the shot would come out at the wrong end and do the business for me. This morning they were especially bad, and I couldn't help remarking on the vileness of their aim to the old Johnnie who was with me. But he hadn't a thought for anything outside fishing smacks, coasters, fish, and cobbles, unless it was the amount of tips he was accustomed to get, on landing, from wealthy gentlemen like me, as he put it.

'I'm a bit of an artillerist myself,' proceeded Chesney—he was, at one time, I remember, in a volunteer regiment, as an officer, he would vaguely say, but qualified, as I understand, by the prefix 'non-commissioned'—'and so I'm pretty competent to reckon up the performances of the men on the hill. Their aim was bad, their training was deplorable, and for the life of them they somehow couldn't tackle the trajectory. The result was that all the shots were wild, and not one went nearer to the target than fifty yards. I think there must have been some awful language on the hill, and the inspecting officer, who's coming down to-morrow, is certain to have a lot to say about it. He'll be hard up for a subject, and likes to have his remarks reported in the local papers; so here's his opportunity.

'We kept well on the safe side of the targets, and enjoyed the sensation of the shots being very near, and yet of being ourselves quite out of danger.

'All at once the fog was on us. It came down from the north-east without warning, at any rate neither I nor the boatman saw it, and almost before we knew where we were the coble was enveloped in a mist so thick that you could hardly see the length of the boat.

'The old chap professed to get into a panic, and began to haul up the anchor with a vigour you would never have supposed to be in his withered body.

'I rather resented this haste, for I'd only got half-a-dozen wretched dabs and whiting, and didn't feel that I'd had my money's worth.

'Not so fast," I said; "you needn't be alarmed about this bit of a mist. It's a bright morning, and the air will soon be clear again."

'But the boatman took no heed. "You don't know these parts as well as I do, sir," he said, "or you'd want to get back to the pier as sharp as you could. I remember once bein' out like this an' bein' utterly lost. The fog was that thick you could ha' sliced it, an' the tide was ebbin' so you couldn't row against it. I was providential picked up by a smack after I'd drifted ten mile out an' bin in a' open boat fifteen hour. I don't want another do like that."

'Just then he got the anchor up, plumped it into the bottom of the boat, and began rowing back like a very demon to where he supposed the harbour was.

'Just stop one minute," I cried; "I've got a tremendous bite!"

'Not a second!" he shouted back, and pulled away harder than ever.

'I was so certain I had a splendid fish on one of my hooks that I hauled in hard and fast. I was leaning over the side, and saw that I had a magnificent cod.

'For the moment I forgot everything but my frantic desire to get my catch on board. I had no such thing as a landing-net; it was a mere question of skill and muscle, a matter of watching for my opportunity, and jerking the beauty into the coble as he struggled and leaped.

'Let 'im go! There's plenty more w're 'e comes from!" the old man sang out.

'Yes, but you've got to catch 'em," I answered; "and that's more than you do every day with tackle like this. I'll have him on board before you can count ten. This'll be a big thing to talk about."

'Don't be a blamed fool, sir," the old man yapped. All the time he was working backward and forward at the oars, panting like an engine out of order.

'Now, you know, it isn't usual for a visitor to be spoken to like that by a native. Hang it, they have to depend on us for a living, and must keep civil tongues in their heads. What the dickens would become of my customers if I took to swearing at them? So I turned to the boatman for a second, just to tell him not to speak in that way again.

'Look out! Let go your line!" he roared by way of answer.

'It was too late. While I had turned to reprove him the cod had taken a desperate dive; my line tautened; I felt a jerk; the boat heeled over; and before I knew what had happened I was in the water, and the coble had been swept away into the fog. I heard the old man's voice asking me where I was; and Heaven save me from ever again listening to such an evil sound. Talk about the wail of the departing—it smote upon me with a vengeance then. That smothered cry from the clammy gloom will ring in my ears for many a long day to come. Ugh! I shall never

see a Scotch mist without feeling all the horror of it again.

'My mouth was too full of the North Sea to make it possible for me to give an answer; and as I didn't reply, I suppose the old fellow worked his way into harbour, satisfied that I'd gone down like a stone. He was vastly anxious about his own safety; if he'd been one-half as concerned about mine, I dare say I could have got into the boat again, bad as my chances were, for, you know, I'm a powerful swimmer.'

'A life more or less doesn't count to an old North Sea fisherman,' I observed, as Chesney paused to relight his cigar. 'They get so used to loss at sea that they can't be affected as we are.'

'No,' agreed Chesney; 'and I suppose that a mere outsider like me couldn't count much to the old man—I'm not a relative, and can easily be replaced by another visitor. All the same, I feel sore that he should so readily have abandoned me. However, to let that pass, I was in an awful situation, how awful I can't adequately describe to you. I couldn't see more than a yard or two around me, and didn't know which way to turn to save myself. I supposed I was about half-a-mile from the shore, but was afraid to spend my strength in trying to swim to it, lest I should get to a spot where I couldn't land, and perish miserably.'

'Thank Heaven, if I'm not much of a golfer or tennis man, if I don't care for cricket, and loathe football, there's one thing I can do—I can swim. They couldn't drive Greek or Latin into me at school; I never got beyond the ass's bridge in Euclid, and didn't understand what came before; but Heaven bless the people who subscribed towards the swimming-bath, and the pater who paid the extra fees they charged for teaching what the headmaster elegantly described as the natatorial art. The pater used to say, in view of my general thickheadedness, that it seemed a sin to put into my hands the means of getting out of some tight corner in a river or canal when Providence might have designed some such means to rid the world of an encumbrance; but I'm sure the dear old man will weep for joy when I tell him how his subscription proved his son's salvation.'

'Excuse this lapse into reminiscence—you might call it some harsher name—but I'm certain you'd feel the same gratitude if you were in my shoes.'

'Curiously enough, after the first shock passed, I wasn't in the least disturbed about my situation. I felt wonderfully cool-headed, and at once began to get rid of my boots and clothes, so as to be able to float and swim with as little encumbrance as possible. That accounts for my rather unrepresentable state when I was fetched ashore from the waters east of the pier.'

'I'm waiting patiently, Chesney,' I observed quietly, 'to get to know how you reached the raft, and how you got from it. You must admit that your method of coming ashore was rather a knockdown for the conventionalities.'

'Needs must when the Evil One drives,' returned my friend. 'But let me tell the yarn my own way, or you'll spoil it; and it isn't without its strong features.'

'It has a strength peculiarly its own.'

Chesney went on, 'As you live by your imagination'—this was a *quid pro quo* for my sarcasm—'you'll readily understand my position. I was a good half-mile from the hill, and about as far from the targets. The fog was so dense that you couldn't see three yards on any side of you. I might swim about in a circle until I was exhausted, or I might float, on the off chance that the fog would lift or a coble run past me. I might make for the harbour, or the hill—and miss both. Now what would *you* have done?'

Chesney looked up triumphantly as he put this question.

'I shouldn't have done anything.'

Chesney smiled in a superior way.

'Because I can't swim, and should therefore have gone to the bottom.'

Chesney's smile vanished. 'There was only one way out of it,' he resumed, not without a suspicion of irritation, 'which I venture to think wouldn't have occurred to the mind of the ordinary landsman, or, shall I say, the non-aquatic person? That was, to enter the lion's den, to make for the targets, and seek refuge on them.'

'A harebrained notion,' I commented.

'Listen. If I'd made for the hill I might have struggled into quite the wrong direction, and even if I'd reached the foot of it mightn't have been able to get a landing, for, you know, the tide was just then flowing strongly, and there's a nasty current round the base. For the same reason I couldn't try the harbour, so there was no option between floating aimlessly about and seeking a resting-place on one of the targets. I determined on the latter, and thought I had very good reason for making the choice.'

'My reason was that in spite of the thick fog the guns were pounding away as hard as ever. That showed me that the fog was merely local, was, in fact, a bank that hung about the hill, and that a mile or so out the sea and targets were clear. The whole bank could easily be seen over by the gunners, and I take it that it was nothing to them what mysteries the bank concealed.'

'I never for a moment supposed that I should not be seen as soon as I emerged from the gray curtain and got near the targets. I knew that I was all right for a certain distance, because, being fired from that height, the shots couldn't possibly hit the water for a considerable distance from the land; and very often they didn't touch the surface until they got to the far side of the targets.'

'But I couldn't spend all the day in thinking, and I struck out for the targets, going finely with the tide, which was still ebbing, although I expected every minute that it would turn. As it was, I knew that I should be carried pretty near the targets. As I have suggested, I did not think that once clear of the targets I should be otherwise than all right and safe. I imagined that I should be seen by at least one of the fellows who are for ever peering through their glasses from the battery watching the course of the shots.'

'The adventure wasn't without its exciting element, once I got into the spirit of it. The nearer the shots I got the more I was disposed to funk and turn back, but I didn't then care for the notion of being beaten, and, as I have said, I

might have turned to a worse fate than that which was before me.

'Sure enough, I did emerge from the fog-bank. I swam out of the thick clammy cloud into perfectly clear bright air, and saw ahead of me the row of targets standing with absolute distinctness out of the water, and rolling gently about with the motion of the seas.

'Now came the critical time. I was in the direct line of fire, the straight track of the forty-pounders, and any moment any one of those awful screaming shot might smash me to a pulp on the water, and leave only a sanguinary stain to show my resting-place. I can tell you, the terror of it for a moment almost froze my blood. But in time of deadly peril the main thing needful is action, and action I went in for for all I was worth. I've fought hard in swimming races to get the first place—and I don't think there's any sport on earth in which you can exert yourself more than in that—but I never strained myself as I did to get out of that fatal track.

'Every few minutes I looked round at the battery with an irresistible fascination, and as soon as I saw the puff of smoke and the tongue of flame, down I dived as deeply as ever I could, so as to be as safe as possible from the shells—for by this time they were firing nothing but shrapnel.

'Once or twice I shot bolt upright from the water, jumping as high out of the waves as my strength allowed; and when my body was out to the hips I moved my arms frantically, in the hope that those on the hill would see me and stop firing. But no such luck was mine. At that distance I must have been practically invisible, especially as no one would ever dream of looking for swimmers, crazy as some of them are when in the sea, in the neighbourhood of the targets.

'At last I saw that my sole hope of salvation was to get on to one of the targets, stand up, and show myself against the flag. In that case it would be impossible for me to escape notice, and firing would, of course, cease instantly until I could be rescued.

'So I struggled on, not quite so vigorously as before, for my strength was failing. Every minute or so a shrapnel screamed past me or overhead, and one of them, bursting prematurely, scattered its horrible contents in a deadly hail about me. That awful shower of missiles put the final spurt into me, and before another shot was fired I was clinging, exhausted, to the centre target, expecting every instant that a shot would come to kill me.

'To my astonishment, there was no more booming, and it dawned upon me that the morning's firing was at an end. I gave a loud shout of joy at my deliverance, and with a desperate effort managed to get completely upon the platform. I instantly looked towards the battery, and saw that the flag was hauled down, and that the guns were deserted.

'For the immediate present I was safe, and I sank down shivering on the raft.

'But the time was one for action, and I pulled my cold and trembling limbs together. I looked towards every point of the compass, but there wasn't a craft of any sort in sight to take me off.

It was impossible for me, owing to the curve of the hill, to be seen from the harbour or the outer pier, and as I had no wish to remain on the target all day, I determined to cast myself on the waters and get back to shore with the tide, which had now turned, and was being helped landward by a stiff breeze from the north-east.'

Chesney paused awkwardly for a moment before adding, 'But before diving I did what I hadn't done for many a long day—kneeled down by the flag and said a prayer, first for my deliverance, and secondly for strength to get to shore. The second part of it, as you know, was answered, and I'm not ashamed to acknowledge that I thank God for my wonderful deliverance.'

There was almost a note of defiance in his concluding words, as if he thought I might take exception to his act as being unworthy of a man of spirit.

But I had noticed also a curious tremor in his voice, and felt that I could not improve on the plan of continuing to smoke in sympathetic silence—which I did.

SMALL CHANGE IN CHINA.

AMONG the perplexities of life in the Far East, by no means the least to a freshman is connected with the management of his monetary affairs. If he has gone out from the home of his childhood expecting to have a similarly simple system of receiving and spending his money—and every one has not the mathematical faculty well developed—he has a rude awakening in store for him ere he has gone far. One of his first wishes is probably to replenish his purse by exchanging a bank credit of some kind for the currency of the country; and on his arrival at the local bank he is faced with a question to be answered at the very outset, namely, into what denomination of money he will have it exchanged or placed to his credit. The ways of doing this are three. He may have it entered as a gold or sterling balance. Or he may have its value converted into silver dollars, at the rate of exchange for the day; but should he do so he must never confuse these coins with the United States dollar, which at the present time is worth nearly twice as much. The remaining option open to him is that of having it put down in taels, or Chinese ounces of silver. Whatever he may do, he must take the risk of the fluctuation between the respective values of gold and silver; and, in fact, even in the two kinds of silver itself there is a surprising amount of come and go. Last year the writer knew a variation of two per cent. in the relation between the tael and the dollar, in accounts received from a city in the province of Hupeh.

But when our friend sets out to have a look at the interior, he begins to think that in the city his financial difficulties had not even begun. English paper money and bank credits are alike unknown and unnegotiable. Gold coins are of no use at all, and even the silver dollars of the

ports are not recognised. The only coin in use is the 'cash,' of which eight hundred can easily be obtained for a dollar (itself worth about two shillings and twopence) before starting; but when a man has a retinue of servants and a number of mules to provide for day by day, as well as his own necessities and luxuries, it will at once be seen that this is an impossible way of carrying the necessary money. So he obtains from his banker—the choice this time being Hobson's—a number of 'shoes' or hollow blocks of silver (called *sycee*) varying in weight from about four pounds avoirdupois downward. Along with these he must provide himself with a small pair of scales, which he would do well to have tested by his banker before setting out, or he may have the misfortune to become possessor of a pair prepared for buying or for selling purposes only, either of which in China is a very different thing from a just balance.

Arrived in an inland town, the traveller probably finds the innkeeper and shopkeepers unable to give him change for the smallest piece of silver in his possession, and he is directed to the 'cash' shops for this purpose. Taking a 'shoe' to the nearest of these, he finds that 'cash' for it would require a cart rather than a purse for its accommodation. But he is at perfect liberty to cut it up as he pleases, and with the aid of a hammer and chisel gets to a piece sufficient to meet his immediate requirements. Then it is necessary to go to several shops inquiring how many strings (each supposed to contain a hundred) of 'cash' they are giving per tael. This takes time, but that is nothing to the natives, and he would need a long purse indeed who would travel far in China and take the first offer of every man with whom he deals. The exchangers will probably all differ in the terms offered, but the customer need have no qualms of conscience about taking the best offer he can get, for he may rest assured that it is still less than his due. But he is not out of the wood yet, for the dealer produces his scales and at once finds the piece somewhat lighter than the seller had said. This is only part of the game, but more time must be wasted before he will concede the point, and pay over a fair number of strings.

The wanderer is now in a position to settle his hotel bill and make any little purchases that may occur to him; but his troubles are not over, for the strings, even if he has watched sharply enough to see that he received the full number finally agreed on, are only *supposed* to contain a hundred 'cash' each. This is probably all right if they are to be spent in the town in which they are received, but if they have to be taken farther on the journey, another complication arises which may well make any man rub his eyes on meeting it for the first time. To such an extent have this people carried their thirst for overreaching one another that it must be gratified at any cost. To meet this craving to some extent there is an understanding in most towns that some smaller number of cash is to be reckoned, called and accepted as a hundred. This number differs according to locality, and varies from twelve to ninety-five. Well may it be asked how any guileless European can ever hope to hold his own with a people who have such a passion for cheating, that even in valuing their own posses-

sions they prefer to call a sum larger than it really is.

It becomes necessary for one to carry almost all his money in silver, for he has no idea till he inquires how many 'cash' will be 'a hundred' in the next town. But another danger he must also carefully avoid is coming into possession of any of the so-called paper money of the 'cash' shops. It never has an imperial or even provincial circulation. Bearing simply the guarantee of some money-changer, it is of no value beyond the town, or in some cases even the street in which his business is carried on.

Another kind of money which is largely manufactured and sold is worthy of mention, although the traveller need not trouble himself with it except as a curiosity. This is prepared for the special purpose of burning at the graves of deceased relatives, as an offering to the dead. The denizens of the other world are supposed to require, and to be capable of receiving money in this way; but the Chinaman is far too practical a person to part in such a fashion with the currency of the empire. Instead he buys for a few 'cash' a large supply of silvered and gilded pieces of paper, or of imitation coins blocked out of cardboard. Although these have no purchasing power on earth, they are supposed to count for much in the transactions of the spirit world. By this practice, one is reminded of an old story of a miser who left his belongings to his son on condition that a certain sum of money should be buried in the coffin with him. The son was, however, a chip of the old block, and carried out his father's wishes by placing in the coffin a crossed cheque for the required amount, assured that it had little chance of being presented at his banker's.

'IF I GAZE IN WOODLAND STREAMS.'

If I gaze in woodland streams
Thy responsive glance I see;
If I seek the land of dreams
Thou art there to welcome me.

If I search the farthest skies
Thou art in their quiet deeps;
'Tis the flashing of thine eyes
When belated morning leaps.

Everywhere I meet thee thus;
Dearest, it must ever be:
Life nor death can sever us;
In my soul I carry thee.

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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Ah! wretched and too solitary he,
Who loves not his own company!—COWLEY.

FIVE o'clock or thereabouts on a winter's evening; twilight has given place to darkness, save for the farewell streak of light in the western sky. Outside—sharp, hard frost, white, silent snow—possibly rain—for it is useless to attempt to ignore this frequent phase of our winter. Within—a small, snug room—a bachelor's den, yet neat. For the last half-hour the cheerful firelight has sufficed the occupant, who has come in for the night, settled himself in his slippers, and well-nigh dispersed the chill that had gathered upon him out of doors; now he is looking forward with pleasure to completing the thaw with tea. A dog—more than one, perhaps—lies stretched on the hearth, and as he dozes the flicker of the fire falls ever and anon on soft, shining, brown eyes. There is plainly visible a 'love for everything that is old;' in the old-fashioned grate, the horseshoe-backed Garrick chair, and the one or two plain oak tables, coverless and time-stained.

The books display a broader taste. Old volumes there are, and new editions of old works; but present too are the books of yesterday and to-day.

And when the 'between lights' has been enjoyed to the full, and the cup of tea is brought in by the quiet, methodical factotum, who is housekeeper, cook, and parlour-maid in one, the books are eyed with loving glance. One is, perhaps, selected to accompany the meal; something light—maybe a review or newspaper, that can be dipped into at intervals. For there is true leisure here: no need to make the most of every moment for fear of interruptions; there will be none within the abode of which we speak, nor from without if its situation be chosen with due care; and the lonely bookworm may look forward to an evening with his favourites without fear of disturbance.

Or it is an autumn day: the sun shines from

a cloudless sky, but with heat tempered by the haze. In the quiet garden or orchard there is no sound more distracting than the hum of insects or the low, contented crooning of a hen; now and again the thud of a falling apple, and ever the soft sweet notes of a robin. Or the seashore at twilight, when one listens spellbound and tries to catch the meaning of the wave-voices. Or it is the great silence of a lonely hillside.

To a lover of the vast solitariness of the open air how the gentlest voice would jar on the ear; with what fatal precision the best of companions fails to say the right thing; or rather—for the 'right thing' is to listen and be silent—fails to hold his peace. Just when nature is wrapping us in the dreamy semi-consciousness of another life, comes the intruding voice, the sickening triviality, and the spell is broken.

'What a frightfully selfish picture you are taking the trouble to sketch,' says some one. My gentle reader, not so. It is true, no doubt, as a general axiom, that it is not good for man to be alone, as it is also true that the proper study of mankind is man; but there always have been, and always will be, those for whom it is good to be alone and who do well to decline the study of their fellow-men. And to force these into society benefits neither it nor them. In the case of such it is unquestionably to the advantage of all that they be permitted to withdraw themselves into that seclusion for which their souls long.

How intense that longing sometimes is can be known to none who are not under its sway. Shall I be considered ungallant if I say that women are as a rule less able to appreciate the pleasures of silence and solitude than men? If a nagging woman gives you no peace, a cheerful one too often gives you less—to use a palpable Hibernicism. Both classes can, alas, furnish examples of Jonson's 'Madam with the everlasting voice.' Oh, those cheerful women who seem physically unable to allow a moment to pass without a remark about something—or nothing! Who does not know one? The woman who is

described by admiring female friends as 'so active and cheerful.' She comments on the weather fifty times a day. If she takes a book in her hand—a thing she does but rarely—she begins a running fire of conversation about it, till the unfortunate volume is again laid—unread—to rest. She comments on the dust on the cover, or the signs of wear on the edges; on the title-page illustration, and the annoyance of the leaves being uncut; on the opening sentence and the style of the first chapter; till the weary listener who had hoped for some brief respite when he saw the volume taken in hand, realises that there are people to whom books are but aids to conversation.

But this tirade is against but a small proportion of the sex, and is all I have to urge against it. The most persistently talkative woman does not fasten on a man in the street; this is a line of conduct appropriated by the male bore. We all know him: the man with whom we have more or less acquaintance and not two ideas in common; and who, nevertheless, persists in being very fond of us. We know the deadly and determined smile with which he approaches; the horrible manner in which he at once throws aside all the plans that he may have entertained before, in an evil moment, he espied us; and the helplessness with which we receive the dread announcement that he has nothing to do for an hour or two, and will go wherever we are going. And for his attacks the wretch generally selects times—few and far between—when we are not in a position to allege urgent business as an excuse for shaking him off, but those leisure hours when we fondly imagined that we were free to follow our own devices for a time and had planned a solitary saunter.

And we are shy and nervous—we lonely ones—slow at shift and expedient; and we fail to invent on the spur of the moment a tale that will 'wash.' Hating 'scenes,' we shrink from the desperate step of quarrelling with our incubus and so shaking him off once for all. So though we sigh inwardly, we smile with our lips and are led to sacrifice without a protest. And we think we understand what Horace Walpole meant when he exclaimed: 'Oh, my dear sir, don't you find that nine parts in ten of the world are of no use but to make you wish yourself with that tenth part?'

Extremes meet. In two widely different places may we hope to find rest from the torment of society: London and the heart of the country. Unless we are very notable persons indeed—and few of us are—we can securely lose ourselves in the former. We can safely loiter down Piccadilly, and stand in the most exposed positions before print and book shops, without fearing that the throng will present us with too familiar faces. We can perambulate the City with an equal mind: for even though we possess friends there, they will be far too busy to spend time on idlers like ourselves, and we shall be passed, as we loved to be passed, with a wag of the head. Ah, there is much to be said after all for dirty, noisy London. 'A crowd is not company'—that company which we would fain avoid; 'and faces are

but a gallery of pictures'—pictures interesting even to the recluse.

But more fitting is the silent solitude of the country: the absolute loneliness to be found in a cottage on a byroad of the Welsh borders, or a retreat in the mountains of Mid-Wales itself. The long, silent summer days passed among the hills with a sandwich and a book: the winter evenings with a reading-lamp before the open hearth. Happy perhaps in a double degree is the 'handy man' who can transact the domestic business of his house with no more assistance than that rendered by a neighbour for a daily hour; he indeed will know the luxury of solitude to its full extent. But we are not all so deft of finger, and must have a servant within call to help us through life. In such a case prudence—if not the pocket—will limit the assistance thus invoked to one individual; few women talk to themselves, and it will generally be found possible to evade the too persistent attempts at conversation made by an elderly housekeeper.

From this haven of seclusion one may nevertheless be very good friends with the world. Many men who shun conversation are excellent correspondents; letter-writing possesses the advantages of talking without the drawbacks. One sits down to write to a friend when in the mood: the flow of spirits is not discouraged by his inattention, or interrupted by any undue eagerness on his part to say his say. Letter-reading is in the same measure preferable to listening to audible words. The epistle is conned at breakfast, bit by bit, at our ease. We approve, smile at, or totally dissent from its sentiments and opinions without the embarrassment of the writer's observation. We even lay it aside altogether, or if not in conversational humour, delay to break the seal till so inclined. Metaphorically speaking, that is; for alas! the world is grown too chary of its time to indulge in the careful and deliberate operations of our grandparents, and the neatly-moulded wax with the heraldic or fanciful device has given place to the finger-marks and creases of the envelope flap.

I pre-suppose and advise some amount of correspondence even to the most confirmed recluse, not only for its own sake, but because it will be expedient to maintain a choice circle of friends for visiting purposes. All pleasures cloy, even the pleasure of living alone, and the solitary one will need occasionally to refresh his distaste for society; though it will be wise to refrain from announcing this as his purpose when accepting an invitation. With the true hermit a stay of a few days or at most a fortnight should suffice to send him back to his cell bursting with self-gratulation.

A chilly evening in early autumn reminds me that among those delights enjoyed to the full only when alone, a fire ranks high. That in the light of which my tea-table gleams white this evening is a peculiarly delightful one. Built carefully in the form of a somewhat flattened pyramid, the body of the pile is crowned at the apex by a few gently flapping flames, the sound of which imparts just enough of cheerfulness and no more. It is neither sulky nor aggressive, but has found the happy medium not always found of fires.

Such a fire as this deserves better of us than

to have its genial voice drowned in the chatter of company. Worthily of the closest attention and appreciation is its every tone; from start to finish, to use sporting parlance, the many phases of a good fire are all delightful. The low hiss of the damper sticks when first lighted; the sharp explosive crackle of those better seasoned; the 'flap' of the little tongues of flame as they leap tentatively among the black coal nobbs; up to the loud exultant roar when the whole mass becomes involved and the conquering blaze leaps in a body towards the dark hollow of the chimney. Then later come the pleasures of judicious replenishment, and finally the pensive watching of the expiring embers; what exquisite satisfaction is here!

I cannot speak of the lonely life from the standpoint of the thorough bookworm, the man who can pore over a favourite volume for days at a time, with but brief intervals for sleeping and eating, and yet need no diversion. After a spell of reading I must spend some hours—days even—in a more active world than that of letters: walking or rowing, gardening or some handiwork; perhaps a day idling in the town among varied faces and busy men. But I enjoy meanwhile the certainty that I shall presently return with a zest all the keener to the silent voices. There are many modes of spending the intervals between study and study, volume and volume. For my own part I have tried—indeed still try—them all; but few are more satisfactory than a little dilettantism in a garden.

Gardening is a taste which is, I fancy, born with the few; in the many it springs up with advancing years. However this may be, there are few occupations that seem to alternate so well with the study of books or a modest wielding of the pen than gardening. One cannot well define or explain the peculiar manner in which the two employments react upon each other, but the fact remains. Cowper's prayer for 'Books, a garden, and perhaps my pen,' has had many an echo.

In living alone, as in most things, it is the first step that counts. To the friends with whom one lives or with whom one has had constant intercourse for years, it will probably seem a hard thing, a deliberate cruelty, to propose to sever, for no apparent cause, ties of long standing; to leave the house or the neighbourhood where nothing but kindness has been experienced, and against which the only complaint to be made is that one cannot be alone. Because none but the recluse himself can understand the insatiable desire for utter solitude by which he is possessed. To others it is a hard saying.

There is, too, the lurking dread that after all we may be making a mistake; that the much-coveted solitude may contain some element for which we have not bargained, and which may prove powerful enough to drive us back to the society—and the laughter—of our friends. The genuine Diogenes, however, usually knows what he is about when he makes arrangements for taking possession of his tub; it is the man who *sometimes* thinks that he should like to live alone, or who is in the midst of too dense a crowd of friends, who is in danger of coming to grief in this way. It is so difficult for some of us to hit the happy medium of society. 'All men are bores except when we want them,' says the genial 'Autocrat,'

Whether detestation of the boredom is strong enough to warrant permanent retirement from its vicinity; or whether, once absent, we might—troubling thought!—pine even for those very bores, is a point to weigh well.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XXV.

A RUSSIAN *kabak*, or drinking-shop, is an extremely lively place at about eight o'clock in the evening. The accommodation generally consists of one large room set about with little tables, each one of which is crowded by a group of quiet tea-drinkers or of rowdy vodka-consumers, as the case may be. There are sometimes a few private rooms for the use of favoured or superior guests. Just such a *kabak* was that situated at the extreme end of the 'Fourth Line' on Basil Island. This large island, which forms a considerable portion of the city of St Petersburg, is subdivided into some twenty or more long streets, which are called 'Lines,' and go by numbers instead of names, and each of which is itself divided across in three places, the cross-streets being known as 'prospects,' and distinguished as the great, middle, and small. It was at the far end, or the small 'prospect,' of the 'Fourth Line' that the *kabak* which provided Karaool and his friends with one of their secret committee-rooms was situated.

The room was upstairs, and looked out upon the back premises of the establishment, close to the Neftka, or Little Neva, which—one of the branches of the greater Neva—embraces one side of the island, while the parent stream completes the circle on the other side.

When Karaool arrived upon the scene the large room was full of noisy revellers, among whom the master of the establishment did his best to keep some semblance of order, and worked marvellously hard in his endeavours to execute all the orders showered upon him by the occupants of the numerous small tables, amongst which he dodged and darted with the activity of an ant among the grass-blades. Old Karaool exchanged glances with the host; and the latter, as soon as he was able to come alongside, spoke to the old watch-maker.

'No. 11 is ready for you,' he said. 'How many do I admit?'

'Four,' said Karaool.

'And the word?'

'Smirnof.'

The host nodded his head and flitted away to serve some insistent customer with tea or vodka. Karaool himself repaired to the room upstairs which was known as Committee-room 11. Here he was joined presently by the four, all of whom gave the word of the day to the landlord and were duly admitted.

When tea had been brought by the host a general conversation began, and to any who had chanced to overhear the talk of these five worthies it might never have occurred that they had come to discuss, and were actually discussing, a matter of terrible and weighty import. The allusions to the subject in hand were so hidden and so skilfully intermingled with a mass of irrelevant conversation that the sharpest listeners could scarcely have detected anything to cause suspicion,

unless they had been previously acquainted both with the methods of Karaool and his friends, and with the particular affair to which their occasional mysterious allusions referred.

Karaool had called this meeting for a double purpose. It had already been decided, at a previous assembly of the inner circle, that a certain projected attack upon the head of the realm should not be much longer delayed. It was now to be decided when and where this precious project was to be carried into execution, and by whom the attempt should be made. Those only who were considered the more dangerous members of the organisation were to be selected for this undesirable duty, and these were mentioned only by their numbers, not by name. Such an enterprise as this that was now in contemplation was, in the nature of it, of the most perilous; and to be selected by Karaool for a share in the executive department was tantamount to an intimation that if the person selected happened to entertain an insuperable objection to the responsible work apportioned to him, the alternative was one of Karaool's green tickets, which was another way of spelling 'removal.'

Accordingly, among much general talk as to the theatre, the opera, and kindred subjects, it was soon made clear to the colleagues of Karaool that the president had decided, subject to their confirmation, that the work to be done should be carried out at an approaching operatic performance at the Grand Theatre, when a certain great Italian star was to make her *rentrée* to St Petersburg, and when the Emperor was certain to be present. Three names, or rather numbers, were proposed as 'executives,' each to occupy a selected position, in the theatre, the vestibule, and the corridor respectively. Two of those thus honoured were offenders in one way or another against 'the brotherhood'—men who by their rashness of disposition, or in consequence of suspected weakness or threatened treachery, were considered dangerous to the community. Had Colya Smirnof been alive he would undoubtedly have furnished a fourth. The third was to be Doonya Rachmatof, whose late adventure with the police had proved that she was a marked woman in the eyes of the authorities, and therefore 'impossible.'

But a question arose as to the whereabouts of Doonya. She might at this very moment be in the hands of the police, in which case it was highly probable that those gentry would soon make themselves masters of certain information—of all, indeed, with which Doonya could furnish them, for she was not of the kind to withhold revelations under pressure such as they would be likely to put upon her. Luckily, said Karaool, Doonya knew neither the names nor addresses of those members who formed the inner circle; neither was she acquainted with the addresses of the rooms used by himself and his colleagues for their very select meetings; such gatherings, for instance, as the present agreeable little tea-party. Nevertheless it would be unadvisable to make any move until it should be known what had become of the missing girl. There was plenty of time to look about one and feel one's way a bit before the gala performance at the Grand Theatre, which was still at least a fortnight distant. If Doonya gave no sign during the next day or two, it would be easy enough to find this man Philipof,

who had disappeared from Kirilof's with her, after rescuing her from the police, and to learn from him where he had concealed the girl, supposing that she were still at large; and if not, anything else he might have to tell about her capture.

'And what if he too were in the hands of the bloodhounds?' asked some one.

'That would not matter to us,' said Karaool, 'except in so far as to show that Doonya is taken, and that therefore we must bear in mind exactly what she knows and can reveal, and warn those whom she may implicate. As for the theatre affair, it must proceed without Doonya if she is no longer with us; but if she is at large she must be found, and her commission given to her—with, of course, the ticket. She is the most impossible of all from this time, and she shall have the first position—under the imperial box.'

This much being decided, it only remained to wait a day or two for news from Doonya. If none should arrive Philipof must be found and interrogated. Meanwhile there must be no general meetings; the committee-rooms known to Doonya must be left alone; Kirilof must be warned and instructed—for Kirilof was the Mercury of the brotherhood, and to him it would fall to hunt up Philipof and squeeze his information out of him.

Accordingly Philipof, standing upon the wharf at Pod-Nefsky, and busy superintending the loading of one of the craft committed to his charge, was surprised one evening, at dusk, on turning suddenly round, to see standing close behind him a man whose face he seemed to know, who begged the favour of a word with him.

Philipof was busy, and disinclined for conversation, but acquiesced nevertheless, remarking shortly that he seemed to remember the face, but could not recall the name of his visitor.

'The doctor,' explained the other. 'I attended Nicholas Smirnof at your request—you will remember—he was wounded by the police, from whom you rescued a lady—Doonya Rachmatof.'

Philipof remembered him now.

'Well,' he said, 'your patient died, I believe, and there is an end of the matter so far as I am concerned. Smirnof was not exactly a *persona grata* to me, you will understand; in fact, I am not in the least interested in him, and I am, besides, extremely busy.'

'I don't think you are aware of the great service poor Smirnof rendered to you at dying,' said Kirilof; 'he sent to the Tsar an elaborate vindication and justification of yourself with regard to a certain affair of four or five years ago.'

Philipof flushed a little, and for a moment his heart beat rapidly. Had this man any good news for him? Nay, after all, how *could* he know the result of Smirnof's amiable efforts? Philipof was no longer sanguine as to the rising of his luck-star; it had set for ever, he knew, so far as imperial favour and justice were concerned.

'Oh,' he said, with a laugh, 'how very good of him! An *amende honorable*, I suppose he considered it, for five years of hard lying to my ruin and effacement! Now I ask you, Mr Doctor, as a sensible man, why should the Tsar believe this man's tale, supposing that he ever receives the precious document, which is the most unlikely thing in all the world? He will simply conclude that Smirnof and I were accomplices, and accused one another to save our necks, and that when one

died he did what he could for the other fellow because he himself could no longer be punished. No, no, Mr Doctor; thanks for your trouble in coming to tell me, but I am no longer a candidate for imperial favour.'

'That's as may be,' said Kirilof; 'but I came, not to tell you of Smirnof's efforts on your behalf—in which he was perfectly whole-hearted, nevertheless—but to ask you for news of his companion, whom you rescued and undertook to conceal. I have an important communication for her.'

Philipof froze up at once.

'If that is it,' he said, 'I fear I cannot oblige you.'

'But we are her friends. My message to her is the most important possible; it is absolutely necessary for me to know what has become of her. If she is in the hands of the police, I have means of rescuing her.'

'She is not in the hands of the police.'

'That at least is satisfactory,' said Kirilof quite sincerely. 'But as to her whereabouts?'

'Ah!' said Philipof, smiling, 'that is my secret, and hers, and shall be revealed neither to police nor to—to other dangerous bodies.'

'Come, come! you must know it would be impossible, even if desirable, to conceal her from us; it will save you time and trouble to let me know where to find her without further argument,' said Kirilof, angered.

'I am not anxious to save myself either in time or trouble, seeing that I have undertaken to protect this lady,' observed Philipof quietly. 'You may inform those who sent you that I know what I know, and that I intend no one else to share my knowledge. You may add that if I find myself spied upon, whether at home or here, or dogged in the streets, I shall know how to take care of myself. The water is pretty deep about here, and rather dirty—not a nice place to be chucked into—and a very strong current.'

'Sir, you are neither very wise nor very polite,' said Kirilof. 'I will only say that those who sent me spare no pains to find out that which they desire to know. I am sorry that you are unwilling to save us trouble; but your precautions will prove useless; you will find them so.'

With these words Kirilof bowed coldly and withdrew, leaving Philipof more determined than ever to be on his guard when the barge No. 15 returned with its precious freight.

'DISTINCTION' NAMES.

IN some weaving and most fishing villages, when asking for any one, you frequently receive the reply, 'What is his distinction?' When several people have the same name, it is necessary to give each of them another in addition to that on his birth certificate. This is called his 'distinction.'

In the fishing town of B—— there are seven or eight names which the original inhabitants share among them. As there is a population of more than four thousand, the same name occurs with confusing frequency. For instance, every year some fifteen Thomsons, eight Walkers, seven Fosters, six Deases, five Robertsons, four Logies are baptised in one of the churches. Or, looking at it from another point of view, five James

Thomsons can stand at their own house-ends and chat with one another, while a sixth can throw in an occasional word out of the window. Or from a third, recently, when calling a minister, seventy-nine Thomsons, thirty-eight Deases, thirty-three Logies, twenty-seven Walkers, twenty-six Taylors, twenty-six Robertsons, twenty-six Fosters, and fifteen Warrenders signed the call. As many more, perhaps, bearing the same names, did not; but, needless to say, that minister does not know who did or did not sign it.

There being few surnames, one might have expected to find a great variety of Christian names. On the contrary there is not. As fishermen, we are partial to the names of the disciples, especially to John, Peter, James, Andrew, and Thomas. We also follow the good old custom of naming son after sire, and in this way multiply the same name. In one respect, however, our practice differs from that of tradespeople and the country folk. Whether the first born be a son or a daughter, the father has the 'right' to the name. That is, if a son, he is named after the paternal grandfather; if a daughter, after the paternal grandmother, and not, as in most places, after her maternal. This custom is sacred. Even Alec Deas, whose father disapproved of his marriage, observed it.

Having only a limited number of Christian names and surnames, the difficulty of distinguishing man from man is very perplexing. In other villages, where the difficulty occurs, it is customary to distinguish a man by the name of the street in which he lives. In B—— we have no streets. Our houses seem to have been washed up by the tide, and left clinging to the rocks like limpets. Not long ago an attempt was made to name and number the so-called streets and houses, but with no success. At least Robert Thomson, who got three tax-papers handed in to him instead of one, does not think so. How then do we distinguish one another?

In the first place, a skipper may be known by the name of his boat, as a farmer is by the name of his farm. This used to be a more general practice. It is said to have fallen out of use, because people felt it unlucky to continue to call a man or his sons by the name of a boat which had been wrecked or lost. Still, even yet the the boat's name is used as a distinction. Two principles seem to govern their usage. The name must come readily to the tongue. We never address the owner of the *Star of Hope* by that name. *Emperor* is the common distinction of one well-known skipper. Or, if a boat has been very successful, the likelihood is the owner will be known by its name.

But every skipper has another distinction—the name of his wife. This is the one used for postal purposes. Once the postmaster refused to deliver a telegram addressed to a man by his boat's name, on the ground that it was not registered. He would not have refused to de-

liver it addressed Peter Taylor Robertson. The uninitiated would naturally think this man's name was 'Peter Robertson, and that Taylor was a 'second handle.' Now, although every man in the place has two surnames, we do not believe in 'second handles.' Every self-respecting native drops his distinction when he goes to a strange place. The name of the above is not Peter Robertson, but Peter Taylor, and Robertson is his wife's surname, which he adds to his own as his distinction. This is necessary, because there are four Peter Taylors, who also take their wives' surnames. The correct way to write these names is Peter Taylor (Robertson), Peter Taylor (Thomson), but the brackets are seldom put in. The first and most general rule, then, is for the husband to take the wife's surname as his distinction.

But this would not always be sufficient. It frequently happens that the distinction is already in use. For example, when James Foster married Katie Logie, there was already a James Foster (Logie) in the village, and he was forced to find another distinction. He accordingly called himself James Foster (Katie). That is, if the surname is in use, the husband assumes the Christian name of his wife. Thus we have John Thomson (Helen) and John Thomson (Isabel).

It not unfrequently happens that both the surname and Christian name of his wife are in use; then the newly married man must find another suitable distinction. Two plans are open. He may take both the names or retain his mother's. The former plan is clumsy, and leads to confusion. Still, either through fondness of their wives or from necessity, some adopt it, and several names run in this form, Andrew Walker (Euphemia Deas). The mother's name is a very handy one. It is well known through being used by the father, and all children get it. In the day-school, however, instead of calling a child, say, Maggie Robertson (Warrender), the plan is sometimes adopted of saying, Maggie Robertson (B) or Maggie Robertson (C). As a general rule, the children take the mother's name as a distinction just as the husband does. And when they marry, if the name of their wife is in use, they simply retain it.

These are the general principles which govern the formation of distinction names, but there are other exceptional methods. For instance, it happens here as elsewhere that the gray mare is the better horse. In other places it is usual to speak of a henpecked husband as Mrs Nairn's husband or Mrs Spite's man. Here we have a shorter way. We call him Kirstie's Alec or Leezie's Walter, as the case may be.

From these remarks it will be felt that an uncommon name is invaluable and that there is something in it. And an incomer sometimes wonders why uncommon names are not given to more of the children. Once a rash husband yielded to an ambitious wife and named their fifth son after the Prince of Wales. For ever afterwards the father himself was named Albert, and the incident held up to scorn in the paragraph of the local paper devoted to 'What the people are saying.' Occasionally a new name does slip in naturally. For instance, when a new minister comes it is usual, as in other places, for the first boy baptised by him to receive his name. A

hundred years ago a boy was thus named after David Telford. His surname was an uncommon one, and it has become a common Christian name among the descendants of the boy. We have Telford Thomsons, Taylors, and Robertsons. Indeed the name has become too common, and those who bear it need an additional one like the rest of us.

The minister, with one exception, is the only man who has given a distinction to any family. For the father's name is never used in this way. The exception referred to is that of a man whose great-grandchildren use his Christian name. The case is most unusual. You sometimes hear a man called Bernard's James's Walter. That is Walter Thomson, son of James, son of Bernard. John Thomson is supposed to be our commonest name, and hence we are with reason called John Tamson's bairns. Once when speaking to an old man about a certain John Thomson, the writer could not make him understand. At last he brought a smile of recognition to his face by saying, Bernard's James's Walter's John Thomson. He knew that at once; but most people would need to be brought up in aristocratic circles to remember it.

There are still other distinctions in every-day use, although not used in documents or on letters. If a man or a woman has any striking feature, physical or other kind, very frequently we refer to them by it. We have 'Long John' and 'Little Rob,' 'Black James' and 'Fair James.' 'English Tom' is the name of a man who stayed in England for some years. These distinctions would not be used in conversation with a comparative stranger, or if used would need to be interpreted. The following conversation will show them in actual use. 'What crew do you go with, John?' 'Long John.' 'Is that John Thomson (Logie)?' 'Yes, we just ca' him that.' 'Who else?' 'Bell's Tam; you'll maybe ken him by Tammas Warrender (Isabel).' 'And the fourth?' 'Teethy's Rob; ye ken wha I mean?'

Obviously it is no easy matter to remember the names of the people of B—. Nativity or a long residence and a good memory alone enable one to be at home with them. This a strange postman once found out. For some reason or other, the old residenter was superseded by this new-comer. We resented the slight thrown upon the village. One week convinced the man himself that it was impossible for a stranger to deliver the letters. On Monday morning he could not arrange his bundle. The so-called streets were not named, nor were the houses numbered. He began by inquiring from door to door, but could not get an owner for a letter. For he invariably used the distinction instead of the surname. At length he discovered his mistake; when he asked for Mrs James Euphemia instead of Mrs James Thomson (Euphemia), Mrs Warrender (Janet) took pity upon the 'pair craittur' and explained the addresses to him. The explanation did not enlighten him much, for we were not otherwise disposed to help him. At length in despair he bought a 'pund o' sweeties' and went down to the beach. He induced the boys and girls with the promise of the 'sweeties' to take the letters to their mothers. But he learned little by watching them as they dived out and in through the closes and courts, like rabbits in a warren. By

the same means he delivered the letters for three days and then asked to be removed. We thus scored against the authorities and our old postman was restored to his place.

CHRISTOPHER COLBECK'S HEAD.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

THE sale at Colbeck Villa had been in progress for more than an hour when John Fernley walked slowly up the garden path. He was a little old man, wearing a shabby greatcoat trimmed with fur, and he carried a strong walking-stick to aid his steps. Some of those who noticed him as he entered the grounds wondered what had brought him; others whispered of an old man's curiosity, and one or two of the more charitable judged that he intended to secure some cheap memento of his long friendship with the deceased.

He passed in, glancing vacantly at the lawn, strewn with odds and ends of furniture, and the now curtainless windows looking so cheerless and dark. Some one directed him to the dining-room, where the sale was then proceeding; but just as he reached it a stream of people came out, and he heard the strident voice of the auctioneer:

'The study next, ladies and gentlemen, the study next. First door on the left.'

Taking advantage of his freedom from the crush, John Fernley turned to the door on the left, and entered the study with the first of the stream. There he found a chair in a convenient corner, and sat down to watch the sale.

He knew the room well enough. Every article was ticketed and numbered, 'By Order of the Executors,' as the placards had said, but they were all familiar. There was the heavy oak table, with its raised desk: he had sat on one side of that on a certain night two years ago, when he had asked Christopher Colbeck to assist him out of the mire of a foolish speculation by advancing him eight hundred pounds on the security of his house and grounds. That was the desk which, on the next night, had received his cherished title-deeds: the flat-topped desk, still bearing as ornament that queer little bronze and that plain birch paper-rack. He remembered those things so well!

People settled down about him, the usual assembly of brokers, private buyers, and curious neighbours. The auctioneer took his place at the table, and the sale began. John Fernley did not notice.

It was in this room that he had paid his interest, twice, for he had never cared to go down to the office, where that deep-looking young Heigham smiled and fawned upon his uncle's clients. It was here, too, that he had brought his excuses for not paying it the third time, and Christopher, for old times' sake no doubt, had put them aside with a laugh, and had asked him to stay to supper. He had been a lenient creditor, but now he was gone—dead a month or more.

And that fawning hypocrite had already shown his teeth in a notice of foreclosure!

The writing-table was sold. The bookcase followed quickly, and now old Hubbard, the retired solicitor, was taking a complete set of the *Art Journal* almost at his own price. The dead man had always been fond of books and things. He had paid him a visit, on that last day, in his bedroom. For some five minutes he had sat beside the man who was dead, yet alive, and who gazed at him all the time with such an intense and painful look. He had tried to speak to him but had failed, overcome by the pity of it. The sight of that awful helplessness and silence had been too much for him, and he had had to go. Three or four hours later he had heard of the end!

Ha! what was going on now? He sat forward, leaning upon his stick. The books had been sold, as well as all the heavier furniture, and now the smaller lots were being put up. The man had grouped two articles upon the table: the queer little bronze and the plain birch paper-rack.

'The last lot, ladies and gentlemen,' cried the auctioneer blandly, 'the last lot. A useful paper-rack, and a fine bronze head of—of, no doubt, some great celebrity.'

'Celebrity!' echoed a harsh voice in front. 'Celebrity! That is a head of Mr Christopher Colbeck.'

The general whispering ceased for an instant. It was old Hubbard who had spoken, and the strangeness of his interruption caused a sudden silence. And before the auctioneer could proceed the old gentleman spoke again. He was something of a local authority on art, and lost no opportunity of placing his rather mixed knowledge at the service of his fellow-men.

'It is a head of Christopher Colbeck, right enough. He travelled when he was young, and no doubt had this cast made abroad. It is a piece of Naples work—the likeness is as clear as possible!'

• All eyes were immediately turned to the bronze head, and the likeness gradually became plain to those who had known the deceased well. The features were those of Christopher Colbeck as he might have looked when a young man, beardless and fresh, and free from the lines of toil and scheming.

A murmur of surprise and interest passed round the room. The incident seemed to unveil a new and unsuspected phase of the rich man's character.

But the auctioneer, seeing an opening, went on again.

'A fine paper-rack, ladies and gentlemen, and a splendid souvenir for friends of the deceased gentleman—a bronze head in Naples work. Shall I take your bids?'

Silence followed the question, and Mr Hubbard took a triumphant pinch of snuff. The late Mr

Colbeck had not been generally esteemed except for his business abilities, and no one seemed anxious to bid. Yet one old man, sitting alone in a corner, had been roused by the words, and was now fumbling with his purse.

'Come, ladies and gentlemen,' said the auctioneer persuasively. 'This is the last lot. Who makes a bid?'

'Half-a-guinea!' said a quavering voice which seemed almost afraid of itself.

'Half-a-guinea is bid!' cried the man of sales, rapping upon the table with his mallet. 'Come, ladies and gentlemen, who said one guinea?'

No one said one guinea. At the first bid people had nudged each other, directing curious glances into the corner. They knew John Fernley's circumstances pretty well, and knew also that he had been Colbeck's friend. So they did not care to stand in his way, and, as for the brokers, the head had no value for them, and they did not want it.

But at that moment there was a stir at the door, and Robert Heigham entered. Here was something of a sensation: the disappointed nephew appearing at the sale of those effects which might have been his, but which were being sold, instead, for the benefit of a charity. For everybody knew that he was disappointed. What value was the toilsome business, compared with the solid eighty thousand which had gone elsewhere?

'Half-a-guinea is bid for this last lot—Half-a-guinea!' cried the auctioneer once more. 'Is there no further bid, ladies and gentlemen? Half-a-guinea, then—this fine bronze head of Mr Christopher Colbeck. Half-a-guinea—Sold! Mr John Fernley?'

Those who happened to be near the door at that moment were surprised to see a strange movement on the part of Robert Heigham. It was a movement of the whole man, a sudden start, as though he had received a shock. They saw the colour fade from his face in an instant, leaving it a ghastly white.

'Sold!' echoed the auctioneer carelessly. 'Mr John Fernley?—Thank you, sir.'

'Two guineas—five—ten guineas! I bid ten guineas!'

Robert Heigham had made a step forward, and his voice, hoarse and husky at first, broke into something like a shriek at the last word. His hand was outstretched, and his face had purpled again with excitement.

'Ten guineas!' he shouted, in the intense silence which followed the outbreak. 'Do you hear? I offer ten guineas for that head!'

There was a general confusion, natural enough under such startling conditions. Heigham's flushed and working face, his agitated manner, and the strangeness of his words, all conduced to a sensation.

The auctioneer was the first to recover himself. He thought the young man was intoxicated, for he could see no other explanation of an incident so contrary to the traditions of an auction-room.

'Very sorry, sir,' he said suavely. 'This lot has been knocked down to Mr Fernley. If you wish to repurchase, perhaps you can arrange with him. We will now, ladies and gentlemen, proceed to the rooms upstairs.'

The scene was over. Heigham, apparently sobered by his failure, stood aside, sullenly watching the groups that passed him to the stairs. He recognised no one, and none of those present liked him sufficiently well to intrude upon his evidently unpleasant mood, except Mr Hubbard.

'Ten guineas, indeed!' said the old solicitor as he approached. 'Ten guineas! It was not worth it, my dear sir. You should not allow your affection for your uncle to carry you away like that!'

Heigham frowned angrily. He was watching John Fernley, who had stepped up to the table to receive and pay for his purchase, which he wrapped up tenderly in a newspaper. There was triumph in the old man's face. It was something to him to have given that young Heigham such a check.

The auctioneer's clerk moved to assist him. 'Mind, please,' said the purchaser, quickly. 'One part appears to be loose. Ah! I see, it screws on. There, that's right! Thank you.'

He settled the parcel under his arm, and prepared to go. But Heigham stepped forward and touched his shoulder.

'Mr Fernley!'

The old man turned, tightening his grasp upon his prize. Was this excited young fellow going to claim it?

'Mr Fernley,' said Robert Heigham, abruptly; 'I wish to buy that head. Mr Colbeck was my uncle and partner.'

A gleam of resentment appeared in John Fernley's eyes. 'Yes, your uncle,' he said bitterly, 'but he was my friend, sir! And I can tell you that he would never have sent me the letter you sent last week. Your uncle, indeed!'

'Pshaw! You mean the notice of foreclosure,' replied the other, with assumed carelessness. 'That was a matter of business, sir, and so is this; I offer you ten guineas for that head.'

The old man hesitated. Ten guineas was much to him, and perhaps he would have given way at once but for that contemptuous reference to the foreclosure. So it was only a matter of business to this young man that he and his children should lose their old home! The thought galled him, and increased his anger.

'Very well, sir,' he retorted. 'Since it is only a matter of business, you may have the head. But its price is eight hundred and fifty pounds! I bid you good afternoon!'

Smiling bitterly at his own jest he moved again to the door. There was a silence of astonishment behind him. The clerk surveyed the scene with wide-open eyes, and Hubbard paused in the act of taking down a volume of the *Art Journal*. Heigham stood motionless, trying to arrange his thoughts. What did this old man mean—what did he know? He had been with Christopher Colbeck on that last day. Was he in the secret, and was this his price? If he allowed that wretched bronze to leave his sight—Oh! how he cursed his own stupidity!

'Stop, Mr Fernley!' he cried, with a sudden effort. 'I will pay the price you name.'

Fernley stopped, incredulous; but Heigham, taking a blank cheque from his pocket-book, sat down at the table and rapidly filled it out.

'Here it is,' he said, calmly, as he rose and placed it in the old man's hand. 'It is drawn

upon my bank, and these gentlemen are witnesses to the transaction.'

Still incredulous, John Fernley took the slip. He gazed at it blankly, but at the same time allowed the parcel to leave the shelter of his arm. Heigham grasped it with ill-concealed eagerness.

And then the pedestal, which had been loose before, owing to the screw having been turned by careless handling, came away at his nervous clutch, fell off, and rolled, with a hollow sound, under the table. They gave it no attention, however, for a narrow, folded paper had fallen after it, and lay upon the floor at their feet.

The clerk stooped to pick it up, but Heigham anticipated him. Yet, quick as his movement was, they all had time to see the words of an indorsement, writted in thick, black letters:

*Dated September . . . 1892.
Last Will and Testament of*

* * * * *

Some one spread the sheet upon the table, and they all read together to the bottom of the first closely-written page. Perhaps there was a little envy mingled with their surprise; but the man they envied was quite unaware of it. He was striving to control himself, yet in his ears the muttered words of old Mr Hubbard seemed to fall into a strange rhythm which he could not break: *Eighty thousand, Eighty thousand, Eighty thousand Pounds! Eighty thousand, Eighty thousand, Eighty thousand Pounds!* Oh, it was glorious! All the house property, all the sums invested in the Funds, all the interests in various companies—

'to my said nephew and partner, Robert Heigham; save and except the following legacies, namely, A Sum of Five Hundred Pounds to my present housekeeper, Martha Carroll; also—'

A pause there; they had reached the foot of the page. The foolscap rustled as Mr Hubbard turned it over. Then—

'Good heavens!' cried the solicitor. 'It is waste-paper—nothing more—waste-paper!'

For a moment they did not take his meaning, but the truth came quickly. The close, heavy handwriting of Christopher Colbeck ended half-way down that second page. He had drawn up the will one night in his study, probably at a late hour, when the servants had retired, and when there were no other persons available to witness his signature. So he had put it aside for a time, the bronze head with its peculiar screw pedestal forming a fantastic hiding-place. A few days later he had been stricken down, leaving it still unsigned.

Robert Heigham knew the rest. He stood looking fixedly upon the useless paper. The unfinished sheet mocked him, and he turned his glance aside. It fell upon the bronze head, lying almost at his elbow.

He had noticed it often in the past, standing upon the desk; but he had never thought, never dreamed what it really was. To him it had simply been a freak of his uncle's eccentric fancy, and he had never even troubled himself to ask a question about it. The auctioneer's careless words had opened his eyes, and he had perceived the whole strange truth at once. What a blind, blind fool he had been!

And as the disappointed man stared helplessly

at the bronze head, he seemed to see two dark eyes gazing steadily at him from the blank, expressionless face. They were living and eager, and their look was that intense look of painful triumph and exultation; that last look which he could not forget. But now he knew its meaning!

THE OLD-FASHIONED COLLIER.

Of the many picturesque details of our home matters none is more familiar than the collier. Along what stretch of the British seaboard, from John o' Groat's to the Land's End, may she not be viewed? What seacoast hamlet, whose foreshore, seen at high tide, is a dreary expanse of mud half-way to the horizon, but contains within its weedy little harbour the squalid old brig or schooner that came staggering in laden with coal down to her rusty chain-plate bolts? One must always think kindly of the collier. We all recognise her when we see her, whether she be lying moored alongside of a stretch of quay from which it is easy to get a peep at her grimy deck, crazy little caboose, queer-looking sailors with shovels in their hands, and the inevitable captain's dog barking up defiantly out of its sooty kennel; or whether she floats, a motionless object, upon the calm summer sea, her dark, bepatched sails faithfully mirrored in the water which brims in gleaming folds to her tarry bends. It needs no sailor's eye to tell that she will be the *Sally* of South Shields or the *Betsy* of Blyth or the *Mary Ann* of Sunderland. The nautical man will point out to you certain little details by which he can tell her, such as a stump topgallant-mast, a boom-foresail, or ill-stayed masts; but the general characteristics of the type are unmistakable to the veriest landsman.

The collier has always been reckoned one of the finest nurseries for seamen Great Britain possesses. In all weathers, and in all seasons, she is washing about the North Sea, or swirling along under her disreputable-looking canvas through the green waters of the English Channel. No pilot does the skipper want to tell him his whereabouts. A glance at the contour of the coast, or a cast of the lead when the land is out of sight, will enable him to say that down yonder lies such-and-such a place, and tell you as much about the run of the tides at that particular spot as the most complete volume of sailing directions. He may never have touched a sextant in his life, yet his 'dead reckoning' is unerring. One would not, indeed, say that the hardships of Collier Jack's life are greater than those of the deep-sea fisherman, but they are at least as great. His vessel may be bigger than the Doggerbank trawler, but it is seldom that she is so stout and staunchly built. He goes through quite as much weather, with this difference—that the obligation upon him to deliver his cargo as promptly as possible forces him to keep storming through the billows however hard it may blow, whilst the fisherman heaves his little ship to, and over-rides the seas like a duck till the storm subsides.

Was it not a North Country 'Geordie' all of the olden school that was coolly snugging-down

and outweathering the fierce squall on that memorable Sunday when, within a mile of her, the *Eurydice*, with her ports yawning open and the crew at prayers, went down, all standing? Such a fact should be pretty significant testimony to the admirable seamanship of the race of men whose perilous labour gives us a glowing hearth in the winter-time. Captain Cook first went to sea as a boy on board of a collier, and there, he always declared, he learnt his business as a sailor. Although the propeller is fast taking the place of the grimy canvas there is still a very vast fleet of sailing colliers yet afloat, and the men who go to sea in them are the same hardy, skilled set of fellows they ever were. If you would learn what manner of man Collier Jack is, pause by the quayside of any busy seaport, and it is ten to one if the very first vessel abreast of which you halt will not be a coal-ship. Watch the little crew of black-faced men whipping up baskets full of coal from out the darksome hold, chatting and laughing as they rattle the handles of the winch; with perhaps a glimpse of those working below, when they step under the open hatches and gaze up, their teeth and the whites of their eyes glistening like negroes'. It is a hard life. When at sea the collier sailor undergoes all the hardships and dangers and does all the work of a merchant seaman; and when he is in port he is seldom without a shovel in his hands.

Among the vessels themselves there are many quaint specimens of maritime architecture to be encountered. The collier seems to have many lives. She grows old and crazy; but still her creaking hull goes on washing about from port to port, and a periodical spell at the ancient pumps suffices to keep under the drainings through her starting seams. The writer once knew a collier named the *Rye Merchant*, built at the port of the Rye in the year of Waterloo. Her burthen was eighty tons, and her rig was that of a snow, though she was subsequently converted into a schooner. This venerable vessel was reputed to have been ashore upon every shoal and sand off the coast of Britain between the North Foreland and the Tyne. It became a kind of tradition that the *Rye Merchant* had a charmed life, like the *Flying Dutchman*. The sooty little craft usually arrived at her destination in the very heart of a storm. Eventually she was lost off Ramsgate in a hurricane of wind, but it took the raging sea many hours to demolish her staunch timbers.

Here is a description of this same *Rye Merchant*, which may likewise stand for a very truthful picture of the typical collier: 'She had been built,' runs the account, 'for the coal trade, and had never carried any other cargo than coal from the day she was launched. Had her skipper told me her age was a hundred years I should have believed him. I never before remembered seeing so ugly a hull. Her bows were shaped like an apple; and what counter she had was a long way under water, so that when loaded her stern looked up and down as though it had been sawn off. Her deck resembled the lid of an egg-box; she was steered by a long tiller that brought the man who held it close against the companion, and the head of the rudder worked in a hole big

enough to ship the mainmast in. She had only one boat, and that she carried keel up on the main hatch, and under it and all around it was a whole muddle of short spars, fenders, coils of rope, with several tolerably big piles of coals, the surplus of the freight for which no room could be found in the hold. But the oddest part of the show was aloft. She had short topgallant-masts, and, the wind being northerly, all sail had been made upon her. Only a sailor could thoroughly appreciate the grotesqueness of canvas, patched with half-a-dozen colours, as though the sailmaker had raked over the stores of a rag and bottle merchant for the materials to make this coalman a suit.'

One may guess how little, within the present century at all events, the sailing collier has changed by harking back to the pictures of E. W. Cook, R.A., published in 1827. There we see the old schooner, or brig, or ketch precisely as she exists to-day. In one of these drawings the famous marine artist shows us the way of discharging the cargo by 'jumping,' then universally employed, and still very much in vogue. It is an operation which requires a great deal of skill, and greenhorns to it get many awkward tumbles. A rope is rove through a block at the end of a derrick, one end of which is attached to a large basket: at the other end are four whip-lines. A very broad, ladder-shaped structure, for all the world like a five-barred gate, is placed against the edge of the open hatch. Four men, grasping the whip-lines, ascend this ladder, the basket sinking into the hold as the rope overhauls itself. When the basket is filled the men below utter a cry, and simultaneously the four men spring backwards on to the deck, a distance of several feet. The weight of their bodies runs the basket up clear of the hatch-covering, where a man in attendance dexterously tips its contents into the weighing-machine. By this process a vessel may be discharged with extraordinary rapidity; but one must be sorry for the limbs of the sailors at the end of the day's work.

In the rig of his vessel the collierman is extremely conservative. He chiefly favours the brigantine, and certainly no handier class of ship sails the seas. The 'butter-rigged' schooner is another very familiar type. The etymology of this expression, 'butter-rigged,' is interesting. It is a term applied by sailors to schooners which, instead of carrying a standing topgallant-yard, set the topgallant-sail 'flying.' There is nothing suggestive of butter about this trifling peculiarity of rig. But it seems that the fashion was originally introduced by the smart little schooners trading to Normandy for butter, and hence this species of vessel came to be called 'butter-rigged.' The brig is another common type of collier, but she appears to be declining. Her double set of square yards require more hands to work them than either of the fore-going rigs; and in point of weatherliness and speed she is not equal to the schooner or the brigantine. Other types there are, but they are chiefly local, such as the Goole 'billy-boy,' the ketch, and the nearly-extinct hoy.

The first steam-collier was built in 1844. She was a queer-looking old iron craft of two hundred and seventy-two tons, heavily barque-

rigged, with a double bottom. She was one of the very earliest vessels to be fitted with wire-rope shrouds. Her name was the *Q. E. D.*, but she did not fulfil the expectations with which her owners thus christened her. The *Q. E. D.* was a failure. She was an auxiliary craft, and whilst the under-powered engines were of small use to drive her against any wind, she was likewise a poor sailer. There are, at the present day, very many steam-colliers afloat, but they are chiefly employed in foreign trade. It is safe to predict that in the coasting trade the steamboat will never supersede the sailing-ship. She is so much more costly to build and maintain, and the advantages of her employment in this particular traffic would be so few that we need not anticipate having to deplore the disappearance of yet another picturesque detail out of the life of the sea.

The collier sailor has not contributed very considerably to English literature, yet one of the most entertaining little volumes of nautical memoirs ever put together is the autobiography of Henry Taylor, master mariner of South Shields, who was born in 1737, and published the account of his life in 1811. The book is scarce, and is a real curiosity in its way, presenting as it does a very perfect picture of life on board a collier in the last century. In reading it one cannot fail to be impressed by the very small degree of change which has taken place in the essentials of the mariner's calling. Modernise Taylor's quaint old forms of expression, and his book would very truthfully represent the life on board a 'Geordie' of to-day. Probably no sailor ever lived whose memory has greater claims upon the gratitude of all seafaring men than that of old Henry Taylor. For he it was who first brought about the beaconing of dangerous shoals and reefs by means of lightships. Like most sailors, when he quitted the sea he left his heart behind him, and in the seclusion of a somewhat poverty-stricken retirement conceived the idea of beaconing the watery highways round our coasts. His scheme was adopted, and the old North Country collier master lived to see a splendid system of floating beacons established. The poor fellow's appeal to the Trinity House for some recognition of his scheme is almost pathetic. 'Many years,' he writes, 'after I had settled on shore I had to struggle with embarrassing circumstances, which, not without difficulty, I weathered through. My heart was always too big for my means; for, however I might be oppressed with poverty, I could not resist the propensity of contributing as much as was in my power to the happiness of my fellow-creatures, especially seamen, for whom I always had a partial regard; and hence I was always ready to join in any measures calculated for their benefit.' And then he goes on to state his claims as a man who practically invented the lightship. But the obscure Shields collier skipper had a hard fight; and it was not until long after the light he had been instrumental in placing had been bravely burning through many seasons of stormy darkness that Taylor obtained a grant of five hundred pounds from the Trinity House.

This, however, is a trifling digression, although it is quite in keeping that the name of Henry

Taylor should be associated with any account of the old-fashioned collier.

One gets a first-rate idea of Jack Coalman's quarters and manner of living from an account that is included in a volume of reprints entitled *My Watch Below*. Writing from the personal experience of a trip in a 'waist,' the author says: 'As in the fore-castle, so in the cabin, the one permanent, haunting sense was coal-dust. It got into one's eyes, nose, and ears like a fly; it gave a cellar-like flavour to the beef, it darkened the hue of the currant-dumplings, it lurked in the mustard-pot, and was visible in floating particles in the rum. Its presence, however, was not very difficult to account for, seeing that two hundred and fifty tons of coal in the hold came flush with the deck under our feet, and were piled against the ancient and liberally-creviced bulkhead which separated our cabin from the vessel's freight. This same cabin was a gloomy little abode, and consisted of a small stove near the companion steps, a table surrounded with lockers which served as seats, and four cabins partitioned off and entered by small doors. There was a rude skylight overhead that let down light enough through its dark windows to enable us to see what we were eating. The captain's berth fronted the stove, mine was opposite the table on the port-side, and the mate's faced mine. The man at the helm was considered a sufficient lookout whilst dinner was going forward; and I have no doubt that the skipper and the mate and I made a very picturesque group as we sat round the beef and dumplings at the little table. My friends had immense appetites, and spoke only in monosyllables whilst they ate; they merely removed their eyes from their plates to glance through the skylight at the weather and at the mizzen that was stretched overhead. I fancied from the quantity of mustard they took with their beef that they were getting to lose their relish for coal-dust. But for this predominating coaly flavour I am bound to admit that the provisions would have been excellent. The corned beef was exceedingly tender and cooked to a turn, the potatoes might have been boiled by Benjamin Brail's mother. I declined the offer of a dumpling very nearly as big as a seven-pound round-shot; but from the way in which these duffs were torn open and eaten up by the skipper and the mate I should say that of their kind they were by no means a bad pudding.'

In the matter of his food, the collierman undoubtedly has a very great pull over the deep-water sailor. His voyages are chiefly short coast trips, which enable him to feed upon fresh meat and bakers' bread. Still, taking it all round, his lot is not an easy one. Super-added to the ordinary perils of the sea he has many inconveniences of a very disagreeable kind to put up with. In the *History of Merchant Shipping*, which was written by a ship-owner who naturally did not take a very favourable view of fore-castle Jack, there is a high tribute to the collier sailor. 'Perhaps,' says Mr Lindsay, 'no branch of maritime commerce ever produced hardier or more alert seamen than that of the northern coal-trade. During her great naval engagements England looked to that

trade more than to any other for the best, or at least the hardest and most daring seamen for her navy. Indeed, it afforded a supply of men who would go aloft in any weather, and fight the guns with the green sea frequently rolling through the portholes. They never saw danger. Accustomed to work their way amongst shoals and sandbanks and along ironbound coasts in their frail craft, and during the most tempestuous weather, the shelter of a man-of-war was like a haven of rest to them. But though they frequently faced dangers without a thought which would have made the regular man-of-warman tremble, they stood sadly in want of discipline, and were with great difficulty trained to order, so that the comparatively easy life of a man-of-warman had few attractions for them. On board of the collier, master, mate, and men smoked their pipes together; and if they did not mess from the same kid they were in all other respects pretty much alike, creating an equality and freedom more in accordance with their habits and tastes than the drill and daily routine of the Royal Navy.'

ELECTRICITY FROM THE DUST-BINS.

EVERY industry has an unavoidable percentage of waste, and to find a use for this refuse is a distinctive feature of the age, and a problem which has in many instances been most happily solved. The most common industry of all—household management—has its ash-pit or dust-bin for the necessary amount of waste product which must accrue under the most skilful and economical rule. But whereas in ordinary manufactures the refuse has been turned very often to profitable account, the product of the household dust-bin has long been a drug in the market.

This was not always so, for there was a time when contractors would not only compete for the work of collecting and carting away the household refuse of a parish, but would pay a handsome bonus for the privilege of doing so; and as contractors are not in the habit of purchasing stuff which will bring them no profit, we may feel quite sure that at the time we speak of—some thirty years ago—the contents of the dust-bins represented a valuable asset. This value naturally varied with locality, and it will simplify matters if we confine our attention to London only. We find that in the year 1867 the parish of St Pancras received from its dust contractor a sum of fifteen hundred and twenty-five pounds as payment for the refuse carted away. In 1893 the same vestry paid more than as many thousands to have their dust-bins cleared. We fancy that any man of business would be somewhat appalled if in the course of such a short time he found a valuable income not only transferred to the wrong side of his ledger, but multiplied by ten into the bargain. He would at any rate lose no time in inquiring into the cause of this vast stride from profit to loss, and this is what we must now do with regard to the London dust account.

Thirty years ago suburban London was in course of formation; pleasant pastures were being turned into streets, and butereups and daisies were giving place to macadam. The speculative

builder was at work, and the builder can no more build without bricks than bricks can be made without straw. At that date, too, no one thought of making bricks without mixing up with the clay a large proportion of house dust, while the dust-bins also contributed to the manufacture by furnishing the cinders and morsels of coal—technically called 'breeze'—which fired the bricks in the clamps. At one time, it is said, brick-makers were paying the dust contractors no less than a sovereign per chaldron for this dust and ashes—the market price gradually settling down to twelve shillings. Now, however, the demand has ceased. In the first place, the growth of London has naturally increased the supply of refuse to an enormous extent; and in the second place, the brickfields are now pushed out of reach far away on the outskirts of greater London. Moreover, the very nature of the bricks has been changed, and they are now made independently of 'breeze.' It is thus not difficult to understand how a source of parish income has been turned into an item of heavy cost.

As an extinct industry the work of the dust contractor is not without interest, and at first sight it would seem to represent an admirable way of dealing with a somewhat difficult problem. The noisome mixture which is politely called 'dust' was taken in the carts to the contractor's yard, and there sorted. This rough and filthy work was performed by women, who might have been seen standing nearly waist-high in the evil-smelling refuse, one with a shovel, another with a sieve, and with innumerable baskets around them. The dust and ash went through the meshes of the sieve, but the bones, rags, bits of paper, glass, crockery, &c. were picked out by hand, and each thrown into its own basket. Such treasure-trove as coins—few and far between—these humble workers were allowed to keep as perquisites, and in view of such an occasional prize, the sifting, we may be sure, was thoroughly done. The rags found their way to the paper-maker, the bones to the soap-boiler and chemical-works, the glass to the bottlemakers; broken crockery went to roadmaking, tin canisters to a factory where the solder was recovered from them, old iron to the northern furnaces; offal and vegetable refuse, to which was added that from the adjacent markets, to manure the fields. In this way every item was turned to account, except about one-tenth of the whole—a residue of no use whatever, which was burnt in a corner of the yard.

Now, however, that the demand for the 'breeze' has ceased, the industry is no longer profitable. The vestry pays so much a ton for having the refuse taken away, and it is generally loaded into barges—taken out to sea and 'drowned.' A far more objectionable plan is to shoot it upon waste land, where in time villa residences will be built above it. The contractor's yard can no more be permitted to exist, even if the industry were still a remunerative one; for the sanitary officer would very properly condemn it as a nuisance dangerous to health.

The growing cost of dealing with this refuse from our houses induced some of the vestries, about fifteen years ago, to adopt the 'destructor system,' a destructor being a special form of furnace in which the stuff can be rapidly burnt

and at any rate rendered innocuous, and this example has since been widely followed. It was found a cheaper plan to destroy the stuff in this way than to pay others to take it away; while at the same time the risk to health in conveying decaying animal and vegetable matter from place to place was altogether avoided. Thus the disposal of the household refuse of London entered upon a new phase, and for the moment it seemed to be a subject which was satisfactorily solved.

In the meantime the science of electricity had made enormous strides. Towns and cities were being lighted by the current, tramways and railways were being actuated by the same mysterious force, and it seemed as if a new and beneficent power had been conferred upon mankind. The works at Niagara and at many minor waterfalls had taught 'the man in the street,' who knew nothing of electrical phenomena, that by the aid of this wonderful force the work or energy developed at one spot could be transferred by wires to a distant one, and there turned once more into motion or into light.

Then it was that the 'destructor' makers formed an alliance with the electricians. They pointed out how, in the burning of all that parish debris, a vast amount of heat was developed and was allowed to run to waste—to escape by the long chimney-shaft into the atmosphere. Could not some of that heat be utilised in raising steam for the working of electric dynamo machines? and if so, could not the current so evoked be utilised for lighting the parish lamps?

This bold question, so fascinating in the prospects which it afforded, was submitted to experts and answered in the affirmative. St Pancras vestry—which had already elected to keep the lighting monopoly in their own hands, and had refused to admit any electric company within their boundaries—determined to put the important matter to practical test, and eighteen months ago a dust destructor plant of the newest design, coupled with an electrical generating station, commenced operations.

In outward appearance this twofold establishment looks like a big factory, and any one not acquainted with its mission would be apt to wonder at the procession of loaded dust-carts which are continually going in at one gate and coming out empty at another. These carts discharge their unsavoury contents into huge troughs, from which the mass gravitates into hoppers and then into the furnaces. The hoppers are provided with rocking-bars, by the motion of which the refuse is constantly fed forward into the fires. These rockers are worked by a steam-engine, which has also the duty of keeping up a forced draught through the furnaces, without which it would be impossible to burn the rubbish, a large portion of which is of a not very inflammable nature. Indeed, a certain proportion of coal has to be employed to coax it to burn. The refuse is burnt in its entirety, with the exception of the pots, kettles, and ironware, which, if allowed to pass, would clog the mechanism. These are stored away, and ultimately shipped to Barrow, in Lancashire, where they are melted down and commence a new career.

At a lower level are the furnaces, which are being continually cleared of the ash and clinker

which rapidly accumulates, and which represents all that remains of the evil-smelling refuse cast into the troughs above a few hours before. Even if no further good were done than the reduction of this noxious matter to such a harmless form, the enterprise would be a useful one; but, as we have seen, the ratepayers hope in time to reap a profit from the establishment. Even this clinker is not a waste product, for it is ground up in mills on the premises, and when mixed with lime forms an excellent concrete and mortar, which are used for parish work. Between eighty and one hundred tons of refuse are being thus disposed of daily, the heat from the furnaces being carried next door for the service, as already indicated, of the electrical department. So much for this pioneer attempt to turn dirt and darkness into light.

Eighteen months' experience has suggested many improvements in the system; and the Shoreditch vestry, which has recently opened similar works on a far more extensive scale, has been able to profit by what it has seen at St Pancras. Shoreditch had for some time been paying a contractor three shillings and three-pence per ton for carting away its household refuse. It now disposes of this refuse in its own crematorium, and gains two shillings per ton on the transaction. A simple calculation will show that, supposing only eighty tons of refuse per diem are treated, there is a net gain here of close upon three thousand pounds a year. The chief improvements in this system over that adopted by the St Pancras vestry—and the writer has carefully examined both—seem to be the use of tubular boilers instead of those of the Lancashire type, and the provision of a system of heat storage by which much waste is avoided.

The importance of this latter provision will be recognised when it is remembered that the burning of refuse is necessarily a continuous operation. Carts full are arriving every minute, and their contents go to the furnaces without delay; hence steam is being raised in the boilers in the daylight hours, while it is actually far more in request later on, when the electric machinery is at work lighting up the parish lamps. Instead of this steam being wasted it goes into what is called a thermal storage cylinder, where it meets a certain quantity of cold water from the feed-pumps, which it heats. This cylinder is thirty-five feet long, and has a diameter of eight feet; and by the evening of each day it is full of water at the temperature and pressure required by the engines.

The parish of Shoreditch is one of the most compact in London, and at the same time a most thickly populated one, covering as it does one square mile, and affording house accommodation for no fewer than 124,000 persons. It was a tempting field, upon which any electric lighting company would have delighted to work its own sweet will. But, following the advice of St Pancras, Shoreditch determined to keep the lighting monopoly in their own hands; and, as we have seen, they have combined the business with the disposal of the parish refuse. They are now enabled to offer the parishioners light on the penny-in-the-slot principle—six hours' light from an eight-candle-power lamp for one penny—without anything to pay for fittings.

This is indeed a boon in a parish where the majority of dwellers are working men and women; for Shoreditch is the seat of the furniture industry, and nearly every home is a small factory.

In addition to this the vestry will supply current in the daytime for working small machines at the very cheap rate of twopence per Board of Trade unit. This works out much cheaper than gas for such purposes, and will, no doubt, be largely taken advantage of in a district where woodworking machinery is such a labour-saver.

In connection with this vast undertaking, which has cost £70,000, are baths and wash-houses, which will receive their heat from the dust destructor, a public library, and a Technical Institute and Museum. It will thus be seen that the parish of Shoreditch is doing much to improve the well-being of its inhabitants; but the part of the scheme which will attract the most attention, and which will be watched with the greatest interest, is the endeavour to provide beautiful light from the noisome contents of the household dust-bins.

THE COLONIES OF GERMANY.

THERE are fashions in international as in social affairs, and the fashion of our century is the making of colonies. The three great nations of Europe—Britain, France, and Germany—are each and all engaged in the work of building up a colonial empire. We flatter ourselves, of course, that neither of our neighbours is as well up to the business as we are, and certainly France has not made a brilliant success in Tongking nor Germany in Africa. But Germany is going about her colonial enterprises with so much earnestness and characteristic perseverance that it becomes the average Briton to know something more about these enterprises than is to be gathered from casual reading of the newspapers. They have not yet proved, nor seem likely to prove, such successes in colonial expansion as we have achieved in almost every direction; but they are notable and interesting developments of both direct and indirect bearing on our own colonial empire.

Strictly speaking, in the official sense, Germany has no colonies. She has certain external possessions which are technically classified as 'Schutzgebiete' (Protectorates) and 'Interessen-sphären' (Spheres of Interest), but 'Kolonie' is a word unknown in the official vocabulary, frequently as it is used otherwise. Since the international delimitation of frontiers, the 'Interessen-sphären' are seldom mentioned, and 'Schutzgebiet' is the most general term in official use. The colonial policy, however, is both official and national, and several organisations exist for the promotion of it. There is, for instance, the Kolonial-Abtheilung, or Colonial Department of the Foreign Office, under the immediate control of the Imperial Chancellor. There is the Kolonial Rath (or Council) composed of members representative of the commercial and other interests of all parts of Germany, who meet to discuss the Colonial Budgets, communications,

railway extension, emigration, and the like; and there are throughout the empire a number of colonial societies (affiliated to the Deutsche Kolonial-Gesellschaft in Berlin), whose object is to assist the work of colonisation, promote and regulate emigration, develop connections, and so forth. Then there is a society or central union for commercial geography, whose object is educative; there are two great African missionary associations, Catholic and Protestant; and there are several companies specially endowed for enterprises in or connected with the German Colonies in Africa and the Pacific. All these organisations are the product of little more than twelve years, for it was in April 1884 that Prince Bismarck announced that a German Protectorate had been formed in the region round Angra Pequena. Later in the same year Dr Nachtigal founded the German Protectorate of Togoland and Cameroons, and the German 'Sphere' in East Africa took shape; while in 1885 the German flag was hoisted in New Guinea and in 1886 in the Marshall Islands in the South Pacific. In these two years the territory added to the German Empire amounted to five times the area of the Fatherland itself. That the results of this territorial expansion have not come up to German hopes and expectations is not to be denied; but that is not surprising, for Germany had had no previous experience in colonisation since the Brandenburgers, some two hundred years ago, formed a settlement on the Gold Coast—which they had afterwards to abandon.

The beginning of the German Colonies in Africa was this: In 1882 a Bremen merchant, named Lüderitz, set up a 'factory' on the West African coast, just north of the Orange River. The Cape Colonists did not like this, for they had always fancied the Orange River for themselves, and wanted to have the territory included in Cape Colony. They were too late, however, for Lüderitz sent home such glowing reports on the advantages and prospective value of the country that the German flag was ordered to be run up in the bay of Angra Pequena. Thus was annexed the region known as Lüderitzland, which was included in the German Protectorate proclaimed in 1884. This Schutzgebiet of German South-west Africa now comprises an area of 835,100 square kilometres, and a total white population of about 2000 (2025 on 1st January 1896), of whom barely 1000 are Germans, and the rest British subjects and Boers. Of 780 adult male Germans, no fewer than 586 are officials and constabulary. The administration is in the hands of a 'Kaiserlicher-Landeshauptmann,' assisted by a vice-governor, a secretary, and two district administrators. In the last official report it was complained that German immigration in South-west Africa proceeds very slowly, and that very few German farmers have arrived. Yet the country is supposed to possess great capabilities for cattle-raising. The importation of German goods, however, has largely increased since the Colonial Society succeeded in establishing direct sea-communication between Hamburg and South-west Africa. The imports are now valued at £95,000, and the exports (hides, gum, ostrich feathers, and kernels) at £6200 per annum. The German South-west African Company have done a good deal in forming a harbour, and in

promoting immigration, and an English company has begun to work lead and copper mines, which are said to promise well; while other companies and syndicates, both German and British, are prospecting and exploring in Damaraland and Namaqualand and in digging guano in the district of Cape Cross. But the colony has not as yet been a success, and is very far from self-supporting. It yields, indeed, a revenue of only £6800 towards an expenditure which in 1895 rose to £223,650 in consequence of a rising of the Hottentots. All the rest is furnished out of the Imperial exchequer. This, to British ideas, is poor sort of colonisation.

One finds, however, a better state of affairs financially in Togoland, the second of Germany's colonial undertakings, annexed by Dr Nachtigal in 1884. This Schutzgebiet, or colony, is on the Slave Coast of the Gulf of Guinea, between the French Colony of Dahomey and the British Colony of the Gold Coast. It comprises an area of 60,000 square kilometres, a native population of about two or two and a-half millions, and a European population of 96, of which 70 adult males are Germans (22 officials, 26 traders, and 22 missionaries). Though the smallest, Togoland is the most prosperous of the German-African dependencies. It grows coffee, and the chief products and exports are palm oil, palm nuts, coconuts, ground nuts, gum, and ebony. In 1894 the exports were valued at £144,700, and the imports at £112,000. There are some twenty-four trading factories; there is steam and telegraph connection with Europe; and the government are industriously making roads, planting trees, and making experiments in agriculture, establishing schools, &c. Togoland is governed by an Imperial Administrator (Kaiserlicher-Landeshauptmann), with a suitable staff, and is the only one of the German Colonies that has yet paid its own way, and manages without Imperial financial aid. The expenditure of the colony is about £19,000 per annum (including the salaries of officials), and this is entirely provided by the customs duties and other taxes.

Another of Dr Nachtigal's additions to the German Empire is to the south-east of Togoland across the Gulf of Guinea. This is the Cameroons, or, as the Germans spell it, Kamerun, where, forty years before the Germans set eyes on it, the English Baptist missionaries had an important station, and a Glasgow merchant had established the foundation of what he intended to be a sanatorium for the European traders in West Africa. Back from the coast, up the slopes of the Cameroons Mountains, almost any temperature can be obtained, and at a certain height the climate is salubrious and invigorating. But in this desirable spot Prince Bismarck, on the recommendation of Dr Nachtigal, determined to establish a German Protectorate. The Imperial Eagle was hoisted, and the Baptist mission at Victoria—a sort of semi-republic—was bought up for the sum of £4000. Since then the Germans have expended a great deal of energy and much money in developing the Cameroons (we retain the more familiar name), although the results are not very great. The area of the colony is now, after rearrangement of the frontiers, officially stated at 495,000 square kilometres, and the white population is only 230, of which about

one-half are Germans. This is, perhaps, the most desirable of all the German colonial possessions; for while the coast region is unhealthy for Europeans it is remarkably rich, and a cool, elevated, grassy tableland is within easy distance, backed by a high mountain-range rising to a height of 10,000 feet. There are three towns—Kamerun, the seat of the government; Victoria, the centre of the Protestant missions, and of two of the trading companies; and Kribi, the centre of the Catholic missions, and also a place of trade. Victoria is celebrated for a large Botanical Garden which was founded by Baron Von Soden, the first governor, in which extensive agricultural and arboricultural experiments are conducted. European vegetables grow well even at Kamerun, and the Arabian coffee plant, the clove, and ginger trees have been found to flourish. The trade is in the hands of eight British and six or seven German firms or companies. The imports were to the value of £316,260 and the exports £204,000 in 1895, the latter consisting of palm-oil, palm-kernels, indiarubber, ebony, ivory, cocoa, coffee, and tobacco. Much has been done in the way of road-making, and Kamerun is now united by telegraph with Bonny in the British Protectorate of the Niger Coast. Cameroons may almost be called the pet colony of Germany, yet it is not self-supporting, and an Imperial grant of £34,000 was needed last year to square the expenditure.

To reach the next colony of Germany we have to go round the Cape of Good Hope, since there is not as yet a practicable route across the Dark Continent; but the nearer way to German East Africa is by way of the Red Sea and Zanzibar. This Schutzgebiet is the largest of the German colonial territories, being officially stated at 995,000 square kilometres. It was in 1884 that the first steps towards annexation were taken by Dr Carl Peters, whose name has figured prominently (and not always pleasantly) in modern African history: but it was not until 1890 that the German 'sphere' was delimited by international agreement. Roughly speaking, it is bounded on the north by British East Africa, on the west by Lakes Tanganyika and Nyassa, on the south by the river Korumu, and on the east by 360 miles of the Indian Ocean.

The native population is probably about three millions, but the Europeans do not number more than six hundred, of which about one-half are civil and military officials. Upwards of one third of the whites are resident at Dar-es-Salaam, the seat of the colonial administration and of the government workshops and stores. Bagamoyo, which will be remembered in connection with the tragic fate of Emin Pasha, is the chief port; from which there is a cable to Zanzibar, connecting with the European cable, and a regular line of steamers subsidised by the government to Hamburg. A railway is in course of construction towards the Victoria Nyanza, and this, along with the Mombasa railway which is being built by the British Government, ought to do more to destroy the slave-trade than all the cruisers that have hunted and pursued the Arab dhows. For governing purposes, German East Africa is divided into eight judicial and twelve administrative districts, with a governor, lieutenant-governor, imperial commissioners, and various other officials. It

involves a very heavy charge on the Imperial exchequer. In 1895, for instance, the expenses of government and development were £302,700, whilst the revenue from customs and all other sources was only £80,000, so that £222,700 had to be made up by the Imperial Government. This grant-in-aid seems to increase every year, which means that East Africa is becoming more and more of a dead-loss to Germany. Nor can the loss to the state be said to be compensated by the gain to German commerce, for the entire exports and imports barely exceed half-a-million sterling, and only £125,000 of that was in 1895 with Hamburg, nearly all the rest going through Zanzibar. Cattle-rearing has been introduced, but not with much success. Cocoa-nut, indiarubber, vanilla, and coffee plantations have been established, and the reports of them are officially declared to be satisfactory. Tobacco also has been tried, but the quality was found not up to the mark. Cotton thrives, but does not pay to grow at present prices in competition with India. Most of the trade is in the hands of the German East Africa Company. The late governor, Baron Von Schele, was of opinion that enough attention has been paid to the development of the lowlands, and that it is really to the hilly uplands of the interior that Germany must look for returns, as there, he says, is to be found a large area well suited for German agricultural settlers. But as the colonial administrators seem to be in constant hot-water with the native tribes there does not yet seem much encouragement for peaceful, practical colonists.

We follow now the German flag from Africa to the Pacific, where in 1885 Prince Bismarck astonished the world by hoisting it in New Guinea just after the British Government had ordered the governor of Thursday Island to haul down the Union Jack at Port-Moresby. Then followed the partition of New Guinea between Holland, Great Britain, and Germany. The portion ceded to Germany covers 181,500 square kilometres, and was re-named Kaiser Wilhelmsland. To it were annexed certain Papuan islands, now called the Bismarck Archipelago, and four islands of the Solomon group, adding further 250,000 square kilometres to the Colonial Empire. Originally, Kaiser Wilhelmsland was administered by the New Guinea Company, which paid all the officials appointed by the government, and enjoyed sovereign and juridical rights under Imperial charters. But this arrangement has not worked well, and the white settlers strongly objected to being 'bossed' by a company which was at the same time a rival in trade. Last year, therefore, an agreement was entered into by which the company should surrender all its sovereign rights and hand over the administration of the colony to the Imperial Government, who will henceforward provide and pay all the officials and maintain a police force and a man-of-war to preserve order. Thanks to the cost of administration, the German New Guinea Company has never paid a dividend, nor has the Astrolabe Company, which has been chiefly engaged in tobacco and cotton planting. To both these companies are reserved certain trading rights, privileges, and exemptions for a term of years, in return for their work as pioneers. It is estimated that the administration of Kaiser Wilhelmsland will cost the Imperial Government about £10,000 a-year more than

the revenue yielded by the colony, so that it cannot be said to have justified Bismarck's eagerness to possess it.

But Bismarck was always interested in the Pacific through his old schoolfellows and friends, the Godeffroy Brothers, who for many years monopolised most of the island trade. He made another acquisition in 1886 by adding the Marshall Islands to the Colonial Empire. This group has an area of 400 square kilometres, and a population of about eighty whites, who lead a very monotonous and dreary existence. The natives, like most of the Pacific Islanders, are nomadic, and therefore the population is fluctuating, but is probably never at any time more than 15,000. The staple product is copra, the dried kernel of the cocoanut, which is sent to Sydney or to Europe to have the oil expressed from it. The bulk of the trade is in the hands of the (German) Jaluit Company, which has also agencies in the Caroline and Gilbert groups. Steam communication exists with Sydney, but only about twice a year.

Such, then, are the German Colonies, and such their present condition. They are not a brilliant collection, and overhead they cost the Fatherland half-a-million sterling per annum for upkeep. From the point of view of Imperial finance, they are not profitable, and for this reason there are to be found in Germany energetic opponents of the colonial policy. But it is maintained that if these colonies cannot be reasonably expected to absorb much of the surplus population of the Fatherland they can and will become great centres of German trade, and German influence. It is certainly the fact that the name of Germany is now a power in remote regions where, a few years ago, it was absolutely unknown.

A TRIAD.

Is the dreary forest arches leaves of gold and bronze
are falling,
Blackened grasses sigh where foam-like waves of
meadow-sweet once lay.
In the umbered beechen branches culvers plaintively
are calling,
And the hills in mists are shrouded that were once
with heather gay.

And the brook that sang in shadow and danced in
the sunlight gaily
Moves along in sullen silence, larks no more sing
overhead.
And the last, pale, tearful roses on their stalks are
drooping daily,
And a requiem the robins chant above the lilies
dead.

Erstwhile sky-reflecting violets in their sepulchres are
lying
'Neath the bracken and the willow and the dark-
clad briony.
Through the rushes and the sedges chilly winds are
sadly sighing,
For the summer and the swallows and my love are
o'er the sea.

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RABBIT PLAGUES AND THEIR REMEDIES.

By MRS PERCY FRANKLAND.

ABOUT ten years have passed since the late M. Pasteur first brought forward his novel suggestion for compassing the rabbit plague in Australia by spreading broadcast amongst these objectionable rodents the germs of a disease particularly fatal to them. The Intercolonial Rabbit Commission, however, hesitated about carrying out this highly original and fertile idea; for, in the first place, the Commissioners were, perhaps not unnaturally, averse to incurring the responsibility and possible odium of introducing a disease hitherto a stranger to the colony; for the germs which Pasteur selected and recommended for this wholesale rabbit destruction were the microbes of chicken-cholera—a malady which, when once it obtains a footing, may rapidly decimate poultry-yards. The opposition raised to the adoption of this mode of ridding the colony of rabbits may therefore be readily understood. Quite recently, however, the Government Bacteriologist of Queensland has discovered that chicken-cholera, unfortunately, is by no means non-existent, and that, unknown to farmers and agricultural authorities, it has probably claimed annually a large number of victims amongst ducks and fowls. The identification of the disease as chicken-cholera from which certain birds were suffering was placed beyond all question by the most careful investigations and inquiries carried out at the Government Bacteriological Laboratory in Brisbane. Since this discovery of the existence of chicken-cholera in the colony, the inquiry as to whether these particular microbes may be employed to destroy rabbits has been opened up once more with fresh interest and energy.

One remarkable feature about this method of rabbit destruction is the fact that the disease produced in rabbits by these bacteria has never been met with in these animals under ordinary circumstances—that is to say, as far as can be ascertained, rabbits are not normally subject to or a prey to this particular disease.

The same remarks apply to the disease which

Professor Loeffler discovered could be disseminated artificially with such success for the extermination of plagues of field-mice, and which has produced such excellent results in various parts of Greece and Southern Russia. The special germs called into requisition in this campaign are known as the bacilli *Typhi murium*, producing a most fatal disease called 'mouse-typhoid,' which has never been found normally prevalent among mice.

Rabbits are so susceptible to the action of this chicken-cholera microbe that careful experiments have proved that death may follow the introduction of a single germ in the course of a few hours, the latter finding its surroundings so congenial that it multiplies with extraordinary rapidity within the animal's system, and thus lays its victim low in an extremely brief period of time. This virulent microbe is one of the smallest known to bacteriologists, rarely exceeding the one twenty thousandth ($\frac{1}{20000}$) of an inch in length and the one forty-two thousandth ($\frac{1}{42000}$) of an inch in diameter, and is slightly oval in shape.

Numerous experiments have been made to ascertain how far this minute bacterium may become a messenger of death to other animals. Thus it has been found that rats, both white and brown, the opossum, kangaroo, kangaroo-rat, a native bear, a kangaroo-dog, greyhounds, and other dogs of various breeds, cats and kittens, were all perfectly indifferent to its action, experiencing no evil results from its presence in their system; whilst horses, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and, last but not least, human beings are also absolutely proof against any of its attacks, although, as we have seen, rabbits and poultry are extremely susceptible to its action.

Thus farmers and stock-owners need have no fear of its dissemination damaging their stock, and no risk is run of the accidental poisoning of cattle occurring through its use, such as attends the employment of chemical poisons for suppressing these ruinous rodents.

The practical value of this virus has been recently put to the test on an extensive scale in New

South Wales, and the results have been extremely encouraging. Its economical preparation in large quantities has been carefully studied, and it has been estimated that a brew of two gallons of broth infected with this microbe will contain sufficient material, added to pollard or coarse flour, to destroy at least twenty thousand rabbits, irrespective of those which may be expected to contract the disease by contagion. Instead of growing the germs in broth and then mixing with pollard, a cheaper and more expeditious plan is to take the blood and vessels of an infected rabbit, which are swarming with many millions of these microbes, and, after mashing with water, add the mixture to the pollard to form a stiff paste.

Mr Pound, the director of the Government Bacteriological Laboratory at Brisbane, remarks that this was possibly Pasteur's original idea of putting his scheme into practical use, although he never made it known publicly. A letter, dated October 1888, from Pasteur to the Chief Inspector of Stock in New South Wales is extant, in which he says, with his characteristic abruptness and directness: 'With regard to the rabbit plague, I have not confided further to any one the secret of the use on a large scale of the means which I have proposed for the partial or total extermination of these rodents by the adoption of chicken-cholera. It is to the government of Sydney that I will make it known if there be occasion. How to arrange for the manufacture of the fatal ingredient, how to mix and use at a distance this ingredient with all its properties, that is my secret, about which the Commission is to see and know nothing for the present, and which I will only make known if the prize proposed on the 31st August 1887 is awarded to me.'

Although the question was allowed to slumber for some time after Pasteur first communicated his idea to the scientific world, as we have seen, it has been revived with increased hopefulness during the past year, and many interesting investigations into the details of its practical application have been made. Amongst others, it appears that great discretion must be exercised as to the time of day when the lethal pollard pellets are distributed; for the chicken-cholera microbe is extremely sensitive to sunshine, and if exposed to the direct rays of the sun for three hours it is completely deprived of all its virulent properties, and the pellets may be devoured with impunity by the rabbits. The plan is therefore adopted of scattering the infected pellets over the selected site either just before or after sundown, so that they run no chance of exposure to sunshine before being swallowed by the rabbits.

Possibly the highly satisfactory results which have attended the trial experiments on a large scale with this new weapon of defence may induce the Australian authorities to regard with more favour than hitherto this novel application of bacteriology to practical life. The official report just issued on this highly interesting and important subject concludes with the following significant words: 'The evidence which has been brought forward by the somewhat exhaustive series of carefully-conducted experiments, which prove beyond all doubt that the disease known as chicken-cholera is contagious when introduced among rabbits living under natural conditions, is, in my opinion,

of such a highly satisfactory character, and so far conclusive as to warrant the government of this or any other colony granting permission to pastoralists and others who suffer directly from the depredations of rabbits to utilise this scheme of rabbit destruction.'

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE agent of the Third Section deputed to watch for an entire week every action of Philipof, in hopes of finding a clue to the whereabouts of the missing Doonya, did not succeed—as has been shown—in his mission, for the reason that Doonya and her barge were absent during the whole of that period. But the police spy did not fail to observe Kirilof's visit to the wharf and his conversation with Philipof, and to report upon the circumstance. His report was sent on as a corollary to the remarks with which the student's dying 'act of attestation' had been endorsed, and was duly presented with that document to those who received and sorted the petitions and papers to be presented for the Tsar's personal consideration. This report did not, of course, add much to the value of Smirnof's document, which was just what the pristaf wished; for, though forced to bring the matter before the Tsar, that official was anxious that Philipof, whom he believed he had offended, should remain in obscurity and under suspicion rather than be raised to favour and power. But though the police bloodhounds were unable, during this week of dogging Philipof, to discover the slightest sign that he either knew or cared what had become of Doonya, the terrible brotherhood of which Karaool was the president and Kirilof the Mereury had no intention of being put off in the same manner.

When Kirilof reported to his chief that Philipof had refused to give any clue to Doonya's whereabouts, though he had revealed the fact that she was not in the hands of the police, Karaool had laughed and declared that this Philipof appeared to be a capital fellow, and must be got hold of. As for Doonya, he said, Kirilof must go to Fedia Kisilief and ask him to mount guard immediately upon Philipof's actions. Fedia had better take employment as a *kruishnik*, or grain-porter, at the wharf, and see that his work lay within sight of Philipof. Every evening at dusk he must knock off work and follow Philipof home, or wherever he might go. Eventually he would find Doonya—probably in a few days at most; for a man would not take so much trouble over a girl as Philipof had unless he felt attracted by her; and therefore, if he felt drawn towards the girl, which was doubtless the case, he would not go long without seeing her. Let Fedia be careful.

Fedia was accordingly commissioned to watch his man. In case he should see Doonya, he was to lose no time in informing her of the decisions of the council in a way she would understand—by handing her the green ticket, together with an invitation to the general meeting of the society, which he must then convene for the day following that on which he found her. Doonya would know by this that there was to be an alternative

to the otherwise fatal message of the terrible green ticket, and would attend the meeting in order to find out the precise nature of this alternative, though she would guess its character.

Meanwhile the object of all this spying and plotting was gradually nearing the city. Barge No. 15 had at last been discharged in Cronstadt, and had taken its turn with the small tug which was used by the firm for dragging the loaded lighters to Cronstadt and taking the empty ones back to St Petersburg. Doonya had really enjoyed her little trip, in spite of the want of accommodation and the coarseness of the food. Ivan and his wife had been most discreet and attentive, and no one else had seen her from the first day of the fortnight to the last.

It was with a thrill of pleasure and excitement that Philipof saw No. 15 lying in her appointed place at the wharf one morning as he reached the scene of his labours at the early hour which witnessed their commencement each day. He could not very well go down into the little cabin to see her at present, for it was scarcely six o'clock, and Doonya would probably be asleep. But Philipof called up Ivan, who was busy, as usual, on the deck of his small craft, and from him he learned that all was well with the refugee, and that no suspicion of her presence on board had been permitted to go abroad. When the work of loading had begun, however, and breakfast-time had come and gone, Ivan's wife appeared from below and sent her husband to look for Mr Superintendent, who was at this time busy in another place, with a message from 'the lady' that she would be very glad to see him as soon as possible.

Considering the shortness of their acquaintance, it was wonderful how much Philipof and Doonya had to say to one another, and how greatly they both enjoyed saying it. Philipof spent the best part of an hour with his new friend in the tiny cabin of No. 15, during which he told her, with some amusement, of Kirilof's visit, and of the successful manner in which he had beaten off the curiosity of both police-courts and brotherhoods. Poor Doonya was more agitated than she cared to show, knowing far better than Philipof the methods of the society of which she was unfortunately a member; she felt that Kirilof's employer—the mysterious, terrible chief of the inner circle—could have no good object in sending to find her, and she was well aware that if the decree went out that she was to be found, found she would be.

Nevertheless the girl did not disclose all her fears to Philipof, but only begged him, for the sake of all he held most sacred, to keep from Kirilof and his emissaries the knowledge of her presence. The police were bad enough, but for those who should have offended against the interests of the brotherhood, the terrible No. 1 was far worse.

Philipof laughed and bade Doonya fear nothing; he would take the greatest care, and would specially warn old Ivan to keep his eyes open and look out for spies.

Then the Superintendent went away to his work at another part of the wharf, first putting his head out to reconnoitre lest some 'bloodhound' should be on the watch. No one was to be seen, however, excepting the grain-porters and other

labourers, and he emerged from Doonya's cabin convinced that he had been entirely unobserved.

But there happened to be a grain-porter at work hard by who did not fail to observe either Philipof's visit to the cabin or his departure thence an hour later; and when his broad back was turned and he had gone well out of sight, that grain-porter found his way upon lighter No. 15, and inquired of the skipper whether Mr Superintendent was on board.

Ivan asked the man, who stood close to the little dark aperture leading down to the cabin, what he wanted of Mr Superintendent.

'A job,' said the other.

'Well, clear out of this,' said Ivan rudely; 'there are no jobs for you here!' Ivan took the fellow by the shoulders and swung him round facing the shore, as a gentle reminder that his road led in that direction. The man slipped, and in saving himself dropped his cap, which he had taken off and held in his hand. The cap fell down the hatchway—and down went the man after it, like a flash. Doonya gave a little shriek as a strange *moujik* came tumbling with a clatter down the stairs, and looked up from the book she was reading. The man, however, had found his cap, and, with a gruff apology to the lady, seized it and disappeared.

That grain-porter had an easy day of it after this. For some reason or other, it so happened that he knocked off work before noon and disappeared. Perhaps his fall downstairs had shaken his nerves. Doonya, though frightened at first, had been relieved to find that the intruder was no one more dangerous than a labourer; and as for Ivan, he never thought twice about the matter. Consequently it chanced that neither of them reported the occurrence to Mr Superintendent on his arrival upon the scene later in the day.

Philipof left the wharf at dusk, greatly delighted with his new friend, and prouder than ever of his ingenious idea for the concealment of this charming girl whom the police and her own former friends appeared equally anxious, and were equally unable, to find.

But after he had disappeared, and while old Ivan was absent upon his usual evening visit to his favourite beer-shop, two men drove up to the wharf opposite the spot where No. 15 lay partially loaded with her cargo of grain. One of these now mounted guard upon the quay close beside the little craft, while the second descended hastily into the tiny cabin. Doonya was asleep upon the hard ledge which served for a bed in the limited accommodation of the place. She started up at the sound, and gazed a moment in sleepy surprise; then she awoke with a start to full consciousness as she suddenly recognised her visitor.

'Fedia!' she exclaimed—'have you found me? What do you want of me?' Her colour left her cheeks; she had realised in a moment that this was the spy of the brotherhood.

'I am sorry, Doonya,' said Fedia. 'I was the clumsy grain-porter this morning, and now I am the agent of the Circle. I am sorry to be obliged to seek you out, Doonya; but it is the will of the high ones, against which there is, as you know, no appeal.'

Doonya's face was as white as milk. 'Go on,'

she said; 'what were you to say? I am prepared—you can speak out.'

'And that is the worst part of it, Doonya,' said Fedia. 'My duty is a very, very unpleasant one, and I wish it were any other member than you who had to receive my message. I was to say that you were innocent of all things excepting that you have rendered yourself a danger to the society by becoming known to the police. As a standing danger to the community—I was to say—you are now impossible—and therefore'—Fedia paused.

'The green ticket,' Doonya suggested. Her voice sounded firm enough, but her face had grown in an instant furrowed and haggard and old.

Fedia nodded his head 'Yes, alas! Doonya,' he said, 'the green ticket, but with alternatives. The meeting is at eight to-morrow, at No. 4; if you attend it you will learn that there is still a way to avoid—you know what. If you do not care to attend the meeting to-morrow, I was told to say that there is this.' Fedia placed a small bottle upon the stove. 'That would have to be consumed before the following evening,' he continued; 'and failing that, the Executive itself would be obliged to take action.'

'Very well, Fedia; I will think it over,' said poor Doonya. 'Good-night. I know you are only a messenger—you are no party to this.'

'Indeed I am not,' said Fedia; 'it is that thrice-cursed inner circle which we all loathe and yet all obey!'

A FIELD FOR THE SMALL CAPITALIST.

By VICTOR SHAW.

A PROBLEM of somewhat difficult solution with many is the selection of a young country where a small capital and plenty of energy may be used to the best advantage; and the lack of reliable and accurate information on this subject is widely felt. It is hoped, therefore, that the following data respecting a country beautiful in scenery, healthy in climate, sound in finances, and honourable in government, may be of assistance to those in this dilemma.

Aided by a wide experience of several countries, the writer is convinced that excellent openings are available in Chili for numbers of young men desirous of going abroad; and he proposes to give full reasons for this opinion, and to substantiate his statements as far as possible by quotations from consular reports; although stronger proof, not only for the resources of the country but also for the facilities with which they are developed, cannot be afforded than the enormous fortunes acquired in a few years, not by one or two, but by many who entered Chili practically without means.

Amongst other things, Chili is noteworthy for the prosperity and the industry of the labouring class. These are due both to the steady and hard-working disposition of the Chilean workmen and to the prompt and severe punishment of crime.

The British minister in Chili concludes his report in 1876 as follows: 'The preceding pages will have been written to no purpose if they

fail to evolve the idea of a sober, practical, and laborious people, very orderly and wisely governed, contrasting greatly with the other states of the South American continent which have the same origin and like institutions.'

The accuracy of this opinion has been verified year after year; and although on becoming a free nation in 1810 Chili was afflicted with revolutions, it has since learned how to escape the scourge which still ravages the other republics of Spanish origin, and for nearly forty years has been one of the few countries where there have been no riots in the streets nor any political subversion of any kind. The revolution of 1891 was an isolated event, brought about by a violent reaction against interference in elections by former governments, and never likely to occur again, as every one who was in Chili last year at the time of the election of Señor Errazuriz to the presidency had opportunity to observe.

For the benefit of those who did not see the *Times* of April 21, 1897, a few passages are taken from an article on 'Chilian Affairs':

'... One begins to realise that the old belief in the soundness of Chilian credit is surely, if slowly, returning. No doubt the success of the conversion of paper currency to sound money is chiefly accountable for this return of confidence. At the same time, the evident desire of the government to reduce its expenditure and settle in accordance with a strict sense of justice all outstanding questions with other countries are factors which should not be overlooked when an explanation is sought for the change which has been referred to. ... The claims advanced on behalf of foreign residents for damages arising out of the revolution have been considered in a fair-spirited manner; and although it is impossible to prevent a general feeling of annoyance that foreigners who come here and, in most cases, owe their fortunes to the favourable conditions of the country in which they have taken up their abode should be compensated for the damages they have suffered, whilst the natives of Chili have no chance of any such compensation, this unfavourable impression will soon wear off and be forgotten. ... As a proof of the return of confidence I have referred to, I may mention that a large amount of foreign capital—with a prospect of a still larger amount in the near future—has been invested in the country.'

In the selection of reliable and agreeable friends in Chili the Englishman has no difficulty. Chilians are courteous and open-minded, although deliberate and cautious; while Englishmen are abrupt and trusting. If there be a slight difficulty in this trifling difference of character it is far outbalanced by the universal esteem in which British character is held; and, since the Briton is preferred for his candour and honesty, he enjoys a popularity both socially and commercially that proves most advantageous to him. A few sentences giving a correct idea of Chilian character are extracted from an address read by Sir Howard Vincent at a meeting of the Scottish Geographical Society, Edinburgh, Mar. 11, 1897:

'Of all the peoples of South America the Chilian appeals to British sympathy most warmly. The Chilians are the British of the Pacific. They have our qualities tempered by their sublime climate. Britons have settled there and become

Chilians. . . . Yes: this Scotland of South America is indeed worthy of the name. Its laborious government, its unpaid legislature, its patriotic administration, its municipalities, its honesty, its energy, its vigour, its morality, stands high above any of their continental rivals.

When differences arise between members of the lower orders neither knife, revolver, nor even the foot is resorted to, but the dispute is settled with the fist in orthodox British style; poncho and hat are flung aside and a bout is fought that would make an English spectator imagine himself once more in his native land. The strictest laws are enforced against the carrying of weapons, and any one found with either revolver or knife on his person is immediately taken before the magistrate, his weapon is forfeited, and imprisonment is inflicted, with the option of a fine. The writer, being deceived by the ridiculous tales one so often hears about the lawless condition of South American republics, provided himself with a revolver on going to Chili, but shortly after his arrival out there it was forfeited to the authorities in a frontier village. Needless to say its loss was never felt, though he travelled often alone in the wildest and least-populated parts of the country.

There is great diversity in the climate of Chili, which may be readily understood when its great length from north to south of nearly 3000 miles is taken into account. The extreme north is dry and hot, and drinking-water is scarce. The extreme south is the reverse; but the entire country is remarkably healthy, which is no doubt due to the polar current that flows northward along the coast, and to the snow-capped Andes which bound it to such narrow limits. The country may be divided into three zones: the northern or mining zone, the central or agricultural zone, and the southern or forest zone. Of these the central zone is most fertile, most populated, and in every way most desirable for business, for health, or even for pleasure. In scenery and climate it is similar to the most delightful parts of Switzerland and Lombardy, and its numerous mineral springs high up in the mountains are notable for the cure of many diseases. It is with reference to this central zone, which extends between latitudes 32° and 38°, that subsequent statements are made.

Let us now turn to the consideration of the openings for small capitalists, or, in other words, the facilities for *producing* and *selling* various commodities.

The principal items of expenditure in Chili for any industrial undertaking will be found accounted for in the following list: Land, native labour, railway rates, and cartage are very low in value; water-power to any extent is available in all parts; fuel is cheap; and the finest of water is abundant. Owing to the wonderful fertility of the soil and the diversity of climate and level, the raw materials used in the manufacture of almost every necessary and luxury of life have been produced of good quality and in most cases at a lower cost than in other countries.

Space does not permit actual figures being dealt with; and though prices naturally vary much in different localities and at different times, yet a just notion of them may be obtained by the following outline comparison between cheese-

making at home and in Chili. The outlay necessary to establish a cheese-making dairy on freehold land in England would be six times that necessary in Chili. The working expenses would be slightly greater, and the market value of the cheese slightly less. This will no doubt appear extraordinary; but it must be remembered that the few articles manufactured in the country are of inferior quality, and that the Chilean produces at a great cost, since he does not work on the improved principles or with the modern appliances that we possess.

Even more encouragement to the establishment of industries is obtained when attention is directed to the imports of the country. For, owing to the small number of factories, the demand for all commodities is supplied principally by Europe, although they could be produced in the country. Thus the great cost of transport, insurance fees, and a heavy duty raise the prices of imported articles, until in most cases they cost three and four times their home value. In 1895 Chilean imports valued £10,957,704. [Consular Report, No. 1795.]

It is this enormous sum which unnecessarily leaves the country year after year that prevents Chili from being in proportion to its population one of the wealthiest nations in the world; and the desirableness of diminishing the imports by the establishment of industries is fully recognised by the Chilean government, as will be seen from portions of a letter written by Señor Perez de Arce, late Chancellor of the Exchequer, to Señor B. Dávila Larrain, President of the Society for the Protection of National Industry:

'SANTIAGO, November 5, 1896.

'In order to strengthen our financial position our exports must bear a higher ratio to our imports. Our exports have remained during the past few years without appreciable variation. We must therefore endeavour to improve matters by reducing our importation, and producing in the country those articles which to-day are brought from abroad, and which could easily be produced at home.'

The writer does not assert that every article imported can be produced in Chili, but that the bulk of imported goods can and will be produced out there within a few years, and that those who are sufficiently enterprising to be in the van during this campaign against imports cannot fail to partake of the almost incredible profits which have made the fortunes of merchants and commission agents. The great benefits, not only to individuals, but also in a greater measure to the country itself, accruing from industrial undertakings prompt their material assistance, which is given by government through the medium of the Society for the Protection of National Industry. This assistance has already been given, and is offered in various ways, such as concessions, guarantees, bonuses, free passages for skilled workmen, and alterations in the customs duties.

Perhaps the reader may have heard of the formation of a company, with £200,000 capital, which proposes to extract and smelt the iron which exists in enormous quantities throughout the central zone, and may also be aware that some of the large coal-beds which underlie the southern zone are already being worked. It is unnecessary to enlarge on the benefits that Chili

and Chilian industry will derive from the birth of the iron industry, which the government have determined to facilitate by their recent offer of a bonus of £125,000.

Thus it will be seen not only that the production of almost any commodity is as easy in Chili as elsewhere, and rendered doubly easy by the necessity felt for reducing the import trade; but also that for this very reason the making of a market is facilitated as well by the possibility of selling at much lower rates.

Although the object of this article is to show how money may be made and not how it may be spent, it will perhaps interest readers to learn that sport of all kinds abounds in Chili, and that a glorious climate, magnificent scenery, and the best-trained horses in the world render almost certain the thorough enjoyment of one's leisure.

Opposed to all the foregoing inducements, there is but one real difficulty that confronts an Englishman. Little can be accomplished without command of the Spanish language; but it is by no means hard to learn, especially to those who possess even a slight knowledge of Latin and French. By the time a man has looked about him and has accustomed himself to the change in customs and surroundings he will converse well enough for all ordinary purposes, while in eighteen months he should be able to talk fluently on any topic.

And now, reviewing the foregoing statements, what may be deduced? That Chili is a promising country, whose people one may regard with respect and friendliness, where every opportunity is presented for making money, where life and property is as secure as in England, where it only rests with the individual to retain or improve his health, to acquire a wide and enviable notoriety, and to enjoy life as much as is possible in a spot so remote from one's native country. And at what cost? Some pluck, energy, and enterprise, the investment of a small capital, and the acquirement of a language.

It need hardly be added that the writer's sole aim in setting forth these facts is to benefit his countrymen; and he feels certain that, should any one be hereby induced to take steps towards profiting by the opportunities presented by Chili as it at present is, the suggestions made in this article will have been productive of nothing but good to all concerned.

THE WHITE GONDOLA.

A STORY OF OLD VENICE.

By HILTON HILL.

[An edict of the fifteenth century caused all gondolas, except those of ambassadors, to go into mourning, and so they have remained ever since.—*History of Venice*.]

CHAPTER I.

Just before Ascension Day, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, when all Venice was looking joyfully forward to the annual festival, Carlo Matranza, a powerful member of the Council, impatiently strode to and fro in a room of his palace, which fronted on the Campo San Stefano.

He was a proud, erect, handsome, gray-haired man of sixty; his large, piercing black eyes

flashed an angry look at his daughter as he said:

'Is it not enough that I should be thwarted in the affairs of the Council, without being troubled with your lovers and your girlish whims?'

'But I am in no haste for a husband, father.'

'But there is a husband in haste for you. Signor Palombo comes here to-day. And—'

'Ah, Signor Palombo!' the girl gasped under her breath, a shade of aversion clouding her beautiful features.

'And the noble young Briton, Lord Wilfred. Ha! your face changes from icy January to glowing June at the mention of the flaxen-haired Englishman. He has your heart.'

'Nay, father, my heart is free. I will accept no man without your wiser counsel.'

'Bah! the crimson messenger from your heart glows in your cheek and belies your tongue. But Signor Palombo was your first suitor; to him, in all justice, I owe your hand.'

His daughter's face turned pale again, as she sank on a couch resignedly. Signor Matranza observed her closely for some moments, and then exclaimed:

'By my faith, Annita, I believe you love this tawny Briton past curing! And yet he is not half the man Palombo is.'

'He is a man of noble birth, more pleasing in stature, and—'younger.'

'And a coward, no doubt. Those wheaten-faced men are rarely stout of heart.'

'Nay, father, that I will stake my life upon.' Annita's eyes flashed as she defended him.

'Those English nobles, I have heard, make brutish husbands; they are sots and profligates—that, too, without the taste or delicacy of our nation.'

'There are good and worthy men among them.'

'Ha, ha! Therefore Lord Wilfred must be one,' he said ironically.

'So my heart tells me.'

'Ah, now we have it! Your heart swings to him as a daffodil to the sun. Well, well, my child, if I can pacify Signor Palombo you shall have your way.'

'Ah, good father! think: Signor Palombo has twice my years; Lord Wilfred is but—'

'Five-and-twenty—a mere youth. He may love a dozen as well as you ere he reach Palombo's years.'

'So he love me first, I care not.'

'Are you sure he loves you, child?'

'His eyes have spoken with a heavenly truth more convincing than words.'

'Hum! Well, well, Annita, trust in your father. Hark! whose gondola rests below?' the Signor asked, as he heard the cry of a gondolier in the *campo* below.

Annita hastened to the casement to see. 'It is Signor Palombo, father.'

'Then leave me, child; we have Council business to discuss.'

The girl affectionately kissed her father and left the chamber.

Signor Palombo, as he entered, was seen to be a short, plump, swarthy man of forty; with a dignified strut that struggled to make up for his want of stature. He had small, dark, crafty eyes, with thick, black eyebrows, and a beard which

was as coarse and graceful as that of a wild goat. After exchanging the usual compliments of the day, the perfumed little egotist asked :

'What think you of our defeat in the Council?'

'It was so near to a victory, Signor Palombo, we must try again.'

'Beaten by two votes—only two.'

'Is it not a pity? Here is our happy festival coming, the one day of the year when all should be joyous and gay. And yet, by an ancient despot's decree, our gondolas must still remain as dark and gloomy as a felon's shroud.'

'While the Doge and his pampered ambassadors show us our meaner rank by parading in their gaily-painted craft.'

'Ay, by the grave of St Mark, we Venetians are craven slaves to submit!'

'If one but dared break the decree to learn the penalty.'

'The penalty is death. Did you not hear the Doge's warning? He said in the chamber, at our last meeting, the first who broke the decree should forfeit his head, as did the traitors of old.'

'It may be only an idle threat. Now, if we could but find some zealous youth who would rather be a dead martyr than a living nobody, we might test the Doge's power.'

'I grasp your meaning. The populace, you think, abhor this decree; once it was broken, they would never allow the daring patriot's execution.'

'Such, Signor Matranza, is my reasoning.'

'Oh that we could find such a man! For my heart is set on repealing this unrepugnant distinction.'

'We may yet vote it in the Council.'

'We may, we may; but this plan would hasten matters. But enough of this for a time. Signor Palombo, I know you came to speak of my daughter.'

'I did, Signor Matranza, hoping for your confirmation to my suit.'

'How has she received your addresses?'

'But coldly of late; but that I take to be her coquetry at my impetuous ardour.'

'Know you of any rival?'

'None, Signor Matranza. None that I own in Venice; and the rotund little peacock smiled contemptuously at the bare suggestion, and stroked his beard complacently.'

'I fear you have one, Signor Palombo.'

'Surely you jest, good friend.'

'Would that I did; but I must speak of what I know, though it pains me to wound so old a friend by the telling.'

'Then Signor Matranza related what he had gleaned from his daughter's words as to her fondness for Lord Wilfred, and concluded by saying :

'It is but a girlish fancy after all; we need not take it seriously.'

But the vain Palombo's brow had suddenly darkened; he did take it seriously. Gradually a sinister smile overspread his olive features; then he asked :

'Does this tawny lord come here to-day?'

'I expect him every moment.'

'Does he know of my accepted position?'

'I think not.'

'Were you about to deny him?'

'I was, for I have pledged my word to you.'

'Then grant his suit—to favour me.'

'Pray, Signor Palombo, do not take offence. I know your worth; no senator in Venice stands higher in my esteem.'

'You mistake me, signor. Grant his suit on one condition—that he prove himself as worthy of your daughter as I.'

'That is impossible.'

'The compliment I may not deserve. But if he is denied he becomes a hero in Annita's eyes. Therefore, if you set him some courageous but impossible feat, and he fail, he is no longer a hero to her maiden fancy. So do I accept a rival to dispose of him.'

'I see the wisdom of your scheme. But what impossible feat can I demand?'

Signor Palombo's eyes sparkled with fiendish satisfaction as he replied :

'An exploit which, if he succeed in carrying through, he will lose his head and I a presumptuous would-be rival.'

An attendant entered at this juncture, saying the young Englishman was below, waiting an audience.

'I will speak with him presently,' said Signor Matranza; and the servant retired.

Eagerly and hastily the crafty Palombo explained his plan. When he had heard it Signor Matranza observed :

'Nothing could be better. But I fear this lily-faced swain has not the courage to attempt it.'

Palombo retired to an adjoining room, and the young Englishman was ushered into the senator's presence.

Lord Wilfred of Devonport was a stalwart, cheerful, open-faced, flaxen-haired young man, with bright blue eyes, and a breezy frankness in his manner which smacked of a life on the open sea.

The senator bade him be seated, and presently asked :

'How can I serve you, my lord?'

'Signor Matranza,' he said with a mariner's directness, 'I am the younger son of an English nobleman. From a boy I have been fond of the sea; my father gave me a ship, and sent me forth to seek my fortune. A year ago I returned from the Indies and China, where I had bettered my condition by trading. My good ship lies at Trieste. In a week she comes to the Lido, when I purpose to return to my native shores. I have loitered here in Venice some months, charmed by the dark eyes and bewitching grace of your fair daughter. In short, I come to ask her hand in wedlock.'

In spite of his preconceived aversion, the young sailor's frankness won the senator's admiration.

'Did my daughter bid you come to me?'

'No; but her eyes bade me speak, and, holding it honourable to consult you first, I have done so.'

Signor Matranza felt a twinge of conscience at playing false with such an upright nature, but nevertheless he replied :

'Lord Wilfred, I will be frank with you. You have a rival; between you twain I must decide.'

'A rival. And who is he?' asked Wilfred.

'A Venetian of good fortune. The balance is thus even betwixt you. Therefore to the bravest

man I will give my daughter's hand, for I hold bravery next to honesty.'

'What will he do to win your favour?'

'He has told me what he will do, but I exact something more; so, if your courage is equal to your ardour, you may succeed.'

'If it is possible I will undertake it.'

'It is an exploit fraught with some danger.'

'Name it, that I may judge, Signor Matranza.'

'It is this: a week from to-day the Doge gives his daughter in marriage to Count Palatza. In the evening there will be a grand fête to celebrate the event. On that occasion I require you to appear in a white gondola gaily decorated with flowers, and pass before the Doge and his retinue.'

'But wherein lies the danger?'

'For two centuries Venice has been cursed with an obnoxious decree which provides that all gondolas shall be painted black, except those of the Doge and foreign ambassadors. Now I and many of the senators wish to abolish this absurd custom, and believe that, once the decree is broken, it will be for ever repealed.'

'I see no great danger in the feat.'

'There is nothing to fear but the displeasure of the Doge.'

'What penalty can he inflict?'

'That rests with him. Banishment it may be, at the worst.'

'I welcome banishment with such a sweet companion. I am inclined to undertake it. But, Signor Matranza, grant me until to-morrow, when I will give you my final answer.'

So young Wilfred took his departure, and the schemers were delighted at the success of their despicable plot.

The next day he returned, having learned in the meantime what the Doge had threatened; and, suspecting treachery, he had decided to act cautiously.

'Signor Matranza,' he said, 'I will accept the exploit.'

'Ah! I admire your determination.'

'I ask but one condition.'

'Oh! a condition?' with disappointment.

'That I may freely confer with your daughter until the night of the fête.'

'Do you doubt her affection for you?'

'No; but such sweet communion will keep me from faltering; for, as you know, many of us are only valorous when inspired by love.'

Signor Matranza smiled, considered a moment, and thought to himself, 'Palombo need not know of this,' and then assented. 'It shall be as you wish. The compact between us is that you shall twice parade in a white gondola before the Doge and his retinue—at the wedding fête and on Ascension Day.'

'Day or night, whichever I may find most discreet,' said Wilfred.

'If the night, it must be before the Doge departs.'

'And achieving this, I may wed your daughter?' asked Wilfred.

'If you succeed.'

'I will succeed. But, Signor Matranza, let it be further agreed between us that no one shall know of our purpose but ourselves.'

'That you need not fear, for the cause of equality is dear to my heart.'

'Then it is a compact.'

'It is a compact.' And they shook hands gravely.

'May I now speak with your daughter?'

'I will send her to you. Adieu for a time.'

Saying this the senator left him, with growing admiration for the young sailor's courage. Now, Lord Wilfred had only conversed with Annita on two or three occasions, such as passing on the Grand Canal with mutual friends and while walking on the Piazzetta.

Presently Annita entered, glanced shyly at her admirer, and after some hesitation modestly said:

'My father says you would speak with me.'

'If my tongue were not paralysed by your beauty, fair Annita, I would.'

Feminine love delights in the shallow artifice of banter, hoping to conceal by levity the true tender passion, for fear a lover should think her too easily won. Annita now fell back on this transparent subterfuge.

'How long has your tongue been thus afflicted, Lord Wilfred?' she asked, with an arch smile.

'Ever since I first beheld your sweet face and my heart succumbed to your lustrous eyes.'

'Shall I retire while you recover your fluency?'

'Nay, sweet Annita, for you are my physician; you have brought the remedy.'

'I? By what medicine?'

'By the melody of your voice. It sets my heart throbbing and gives me back my speech.'

'It must be a light heart that is so easily moved.'

'All the lighter for the light of your eyes, which, I perceive, can be merry,' he gaily said, taking her hand, gently leading her to a couch, and seating himself beside her.

After they were seated Lord Wilfred continued:

'I fear you think me somewhat brusque. Now tell me truly, how do you find me?'

'Wanting in flattery and lacking in assurance,' she answered, roguishly glancing at him.

'That I am—the assurance of your love,' he quickly replied, with joyous rapture.

'That you may not have from my lips.'

'Then I will trust your eyes, for they reflect your heart.'

'Nay, you are mistaken; I'—

'Say I am; but, while you blush, I will be content to trust the double reflection.' Then he pleaded seriously: 'Sweet Annita, thus it is between us: your father has sanctioned my suit, on condition that I prove my courage to be worthy your goodness and beauty.'

'What is the condition of the barter?' she asked disdainfully.

'Nay, it is not exactly a barter. I'—

'Then what is it? For what is worth having of me can be neither bought nor sold,' cried the girl, her eyes gleaming with indignation.

'Bravely said, Annita! For did I not hope to win you first I would not undertake the exploit.'

'Exploit! What is the exploit?'

Thereupon he told her what he had promised to do. She was silent a moment, and then with some emotion and impetuosity cried:

'It is a rash deed, which you must not attempt for me. The Doge hates my father, and the hate is returned tenfold; because, when he was elected

Doge my father was a dangerous rival, and would have been chosen in his stead but for unscrupulous bribery; for he was beloved by the people as a true republican, and had promised and had gained them many needed reforms. In spite of the Doge's golden bribery, my father lacked but two votes of being elected. Do you wonder he abhors him?' Annita's eyes glowed and her breast heaved with the intensity of her feeling, so that she looked to him more beautiful than ever.

'No, I do not,' replied the young lover.

'It would be madness,' she continued musingly.

'No, you must not attempt the exploit for me.'

'Then I must lose you.'

'Rather so than lose your head.'

'Nay; for my heart is already lost to you, and without it what use is my head?'

She could not reply; his voice was so beguiling, and his eyes so frank and tender, that she felt an irresistible sense of confidence in him.

'Why does my father name such a dangerous condition?' she asked half to herself.

'Because,' he answered, 'there is no one who will undertake the feat if I do not. Your father tells me I have a rival.'

'Not to my heart,' she flashed forth, a dark scorn gathering in her eyes as she thought of Palombo.

'Ha! is it so? Then, by heaven! I will keep faith with your father!'

'Nay, I did not mean—I—I—was betrayed—I'—she faltered, blushing. But he pressed her to his heart and smothered her protestations with caresses.

At length, with her head nestling contentedly against his breast, she looked up and murmured:

'Ah! I fear you will think me lightly won.'

'Nay, nay, my darling. Your chance avowed is to me priceless for its undoubted truth.'

'Ah!' she sighed, 'our Italian love is a brooding summer storm held in check by clouds of modesty until some lightning-flash rends the vapours, and a torrent of passion descends on the object of our affection. Then our love is jealous, constant, and eternal.'

Her fervid words thrilled him through and through; her dark, lustrous eyes enchanted him. This was love indeed. When they parted, he vowed to her that nothing but the will of Heaven should prevent their union.

HUMOUR IN THE SERMON-TEXT.

In a recent address before the London Sunday School Union, Dean Farrar, speaking of ministers who take bits of sentences as texts, told how a distinguished ecclesiastic, lately deceased, had once preached a very famous sermon on the text, 'Hear the church.' Everybody knows that there is no such text, it is merely a fragment of a verse. Archbishop Whately remarked, 'He might just as well have chosen "Hang all the law and the prophets."' But more curious things than this are on record in the matter of sermon-texts. When ladies wore their 'topknots' ridiculously high it occurred to Rowland Hill to admonish them from the pulpit, and he did it by means of the words, 'Topknot, come down,' which he evolved from Matthew xxiv. 17, 'Let him which is on the house-top not come

down.' Of course nothing but the exceeding quaintness of the preacher could have excused such a liberty with the sense and sound of the sacred text. It was almost as bad as Swift's uniquely brief discourse on the text, 'He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth to the Lord.' 'My friends,' said the Dean, as he closed the book, 'if you approve of the security, down with the dust.' As a matter of fact, it is usually only the quaint preachers who do venture on such liberties.

Even on the sombre subject of matrimony the clerical humorist has had his joke in the way of texts. Sometimes, no doubt, the humour has been unconscious, as when the absent-minded preacher, forgetting that his congregation were on the tip-toe of expectation in regard to a recent 'capture' by one of their lady members, announced as his text, 'Behold! the bridegroom cometh.' But more often the humour, it may be suspected, has been intentional. So, at anyrate, the young bride must have regarded it when, having extracted a promise of a wedding sermon from her vicar, she heard the text announced, 'Yea, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth'—the honeymoon, of course!

The New England Puritan fathers were especially good at this kind of thing, partly no doubt because they shared to such an extent their domestic joys and sorrows with the members of their congregation. Parson Turell—of whom Dr Holmes has written, 'Over at Medford he used to dwell'—had for his first wife a handsome brunette, and the first sermon he preached after his wedding was from the text, 'I am black but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem.' When he married a second time, the bride very likely had the choice of the text, for it was found to be, 'He is altogether lovely; this is my beloved, and this is my friend.' Brides really were allowed to select the texts in those days of New England history. Thus, when a certain John Physick and Mary Prescott were married in Portland in 1770, the lady gave the preacher the following text for the bridal Sunday: 'Mary hath chosen that good part.' Again, when Abby Smith, daughter of Parson Smith, married Squire John Adams—whom her father disliked so much that he declined having him home to dinner—she chose this text for her wedding sermon: 'John came neither eating bread nor drinking water, and ye say he hath a devil.' The high-spirited bride, it is interesting to note, had the honour of living to be the wife of one President of the United States and the mother of another. It is indeed almost incredible what things were done by the New England divines in the way of making their texts suitable for occasions and events. Mrs Earle tells of a cleric giving out one morning as his text: 'Unto us a son is born,' thus notifying a surprised congregation of an event which they had been awaiting for some weeks. Another preached from the text, 'My servant lieth at home sick,' which was literally the case; while still another—a cynical bachelor, we may be sure—dared to announce this abbreviated text: 'A wonder was seen in heaven—a woman.' Dr Mather Byles, of Boston, being disappointed through the non-appearance of a minister named Prince, who had been expected to deliver the sermon, himself preached from the text, 'Put not your trust in

princes.' But Dr Byles was one who would always 'court a grin when he should win a soul.'

Texts have often been chosen with the view of conveying a gentle admonition to some one of the preacher's hearers who might be supposed in special need of it. The best story in this connection is perhaps that of the very evangelical old canon who had a son of advanced ritualistic tendencies. In due course the younger cleric obtained a living, and was very anxious that his father should preach in his church. At last, after long delay and much persuasion, the canon consented, and the rector was delighted. His joy was, however, shortlived; for when the old man gave out his text, it ran, 'Lord, have mercy upon my son, for he is a lunatic.' One minister in a New England community once felt it necessary to reprove a money-making parishioner who had stored and was holding in reserve (with the hope of higher prices) a large quantity of corn which was sadly needed for consumption in the town. The parson preached from the very appropriate text in Proverbs, 'He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him.' As he grew warmer in his application of the text, he expected to see some signs of penitence in the corndealer; but that worthy only sat up stiff and defiant. At last the preacher could bear it no longer, and roared out, 'Colonel Ingraham! Colonel Ingraham! you know I mean you; why don't you hang down your head!' The Colonel should have belonged to the congregation of the coloured preacher who deplored that he could not say a word to his people about stealing, because 'it would throw such a coldness over de meeting.'

There is at least one case on record of a man finding a libel in the words of a hymn given out by his minister; and, no doubt, if we had some of the old humorists in the pulpit in these days there would be instances of libel in the sermon-text too. A clergyman in the West Country had two curates, one a comparatively old man, the other very young. With the former he had not been able to work agreeably; and on being invited to another living, he accepted it, and took the young curate with him. Naturally there was a farewell sermon; and we can imagine the feelings of the curate who was to be left behind when he heard the text given out, 'Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship.' Sterne once declared in regard to the widely-respected maxim, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, that there was nothing right about it but its Latin. This view was evidently shared by a certain Edinburgh minister, who, being asked to preach the funeral sermon of a miserly brother cleric, chose as his text the words, 'And the beggar died.' He may, however, have done it unwittingly, for many *mal-apropos* texts are on record. Mr Spurgeon once warned his students to be very particular in this matter. One brother, he declared, had once preached on the loss of a ship with all hands on board from 'So He bringeth them to their desired haven;' while another, returning from his honeymoon trip, took for his text, 'The troubles of my heart are enlarged; oh! bring me out of my distresses.' These instances of Mr Spurgeon's can only be capped by the text of the country minister who had been appointed chaplain to a jail: 'I go to prepare a

place for you!' There is a story of another chaplain who addressed the prisoners on one occasion from the words, 'It is good for us to be here;' but this case wants authentication.

Texts can very often be made peculiarly appropriate to the passing circumstances of the time. A year or two ago a minister in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, who had been an unsuccessful candidate at the parish council election, took his revenge on the Sunday morning by choosing for his text the words in Job, 'No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom will die with you. But I have understanding as well as you. I am as one mocked of his neighbours; the just, upright man is laughed to scorn.' Any congregation might well be excused for smiling when the fact was recalled that the preacher in his address to the electors asserted that only men of 'upright character' should be chosen. The text was excellent, but not quite so pointed as that chosen by the Rev. H. Paul when he was leaving a church in Ayr, 'And they fell upon Paul's neck and kissed him.' When the old 'repeating' tunes were first introduced they so scandalised many of the clergymen that the latter felt called upon to preach special sermons against the innovation. One belligerent parson found his text in Amos, 'The songs of the temple shall be turned into howling;' while another discovered what he wanted in Acts, 'Those that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.' There is a very good story told of a certain ancient clergyman who had undertaken a sea voyage for the first time. He was very sick for three days, but he was able to preach on the Sunday; and the worthy man could think of nothing better for a subject than the text from Revelation, 'There shall be no more sea.' He was thoroughly persuaded that the drying up of the ocean was a part of the heavenly blessedness to come—for had he not been very sick on the Atlantic! Another clergyman, the Rev. Edward Massey, was persuaded that vaccination was an evil to be denounced from the pulpit. To find a text prohibiting it in Scripture would be a difficulty with most people; but Mr Massey was like the injudicious cleric of whom it was said that 'If there's an ill text in the Bible that creature is sure to get hold of it;' and he found his want supplied in these words, 'So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown.' After this one would like to know what was Coleridge's text when he preached at Shrewsbury to seventeen persons on the hair-powder tax; more especially as the author of the *Ancient Mariner* had afterwards to confess to 'a most censurable application of a text from Isaiah' (xvi. 11) in a certain tirade against fast-days.

Some preachers of modern times have shown us how a sermon may be preached without any text at all; and certainly it would seem as if very little could be made out of some texts which have been chosen at various times by various divines. Dr Boyd of St Andrews tells that he once heard a sermon from the text, 'A colt, the foal of an ass;' and it is on record that somebody once discoursed from the words, 'And there was much grass in the place.' One divine who died some years ago at Wellingborough had a fancy for texts in which ordinary people would generally

fail to see even the elements of a sermon. Thus, one morning he preached from the text, 'And he took from the lion's mouth two legs and the part of an ear;' while on another Sunday he discoursed from the words, 'Nine-and-twenty knives.' Very often, as we all know, the text has only the faintest connection with the sermon; but it is not easy to see how a preacher could 'get away' from such texts as these.

Now and again, no doubt, the text is everything, the sermon nothing. There is an anecdote of a London bishop who, having read that story of John Wesley cutting out every word of his discourse that his servant-maid did not understand, determined to preach to a country congregation the simplest sermon he could write. He chose an elementary subject, and took as his text, 'The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.' On leaving the church he asked the parish clerk what he thought of the sermon. 'Oh, my lord,' said he, 'it was very fine—very fine and grand. I've been talking it over with Mr Beard, and we said how fine it was. But, after all, we can't help thinking that there is a God.' It really does not do for a preacher to forget his audience, or to take too much for granted. A young Scottish clergyman, fresh from the class-room, was allowed on one occasion to preach in a certain parish church. Giving out the text, 'Who can find a virtuous woman?' he led off with the remark, 'Lady Macbeth remains the eternal type of the ambitious female.' Afterwards a parishioner inquired, 'Who is yon Lady Macbeth?' He had sought her name in all his available works of reference, and not finding it, concluded, 'She'll be some grand London lady.'

A NIGHT ON URONDI KOPJE.

'GOOD-NIGHT, Tom dearest.'

'Good-night, my darling.'

Two not very unusual farewells between man and maiden, surely—words, or their like, which have been spoken ever since the world was man's inheritance, which have been uttered in every language and every land where men and women have lived and loved. Always new, and yet old as creation itself, the sweet idyl of love is still all-powerful, and claims its votaries wherever they be.

A strange place indeed, one would say, to plight troth in; but love is no respecter of places—the bare veldt or the London drawing-room, they are all one to love; and, for all we know, this is not the first time by many that Urondi Kopje has been the repository of like secrets, for about ten years ago it was the abode of a tribe of Mashonas, who, in the nature of things, would be there still had not a Matabele war-party made an end of them one day in the way that commended itself to the professors of political economy of that mild-natured people.

But it is no dusky maiden and savage warrior that are adding to Urondi Kopje's burden to-night, for this time its confidants are white. The man is dressed in the usual pioneer's dress of buckskin breeches, high boots, loose red shirt, and wide felt hat, and is a fine-looking man of about thirty, as he stands, with the bridle loosely thrown over one arm, and his hands on the girl's

shoulders, looking, with a gaze full of love, into her eyes. The girl, whose arms are resting on the man's, and who is looking up at him with her lips half-parted in a bewitching smile, is as pretty as one could see, with a colour born of health and exercise; and Tom Easterbrook may well congratulate himself on his luck, for Minnie Ingram is as fair and sweet a little woman as ever made a man's heart beat fast.

'Oh, Tom dear, I do so wish you hadn't to take this lonely ride to-night! I don't know what it is, but I feel anxious somehow. Do be careful for my sake;' and the girl, whose face has suddenly become overcast with an anxious look, says the last words in such a pleading tone that there is only one answer Tom can think of adequate for the occasion. But, somehow, it does not have the usual effect this time, and instead of brightening, as he expected and hoped, she goes on:

'I don't know if there is anything in it, but I can't help thinking that there has been something going on at the boys' kraal the last few days—they have seemed so surly lately; and you know father is not very kind to them—I mean, he doesn't seem to understand them, and—I don't know, but I do feel so uneasy.'

'There, there! little one,' Tom says, 'don't worry your little head about me; and as for your father, I guess he's pretty well able to keep order amongst the boys, even if they do kick up a shindy. And now I must be off, or I shan't get back to Inyati till midnight. Good-night, sweet one;' and, with a last kiss, Tom swings himself on to his horse and turns its head down the track which leads from the summit of the Kopje down to the level veldt.

As he strikes the plain he passes the kraal where the native boys sleep. It is a common enough African night-scene which meets his eyes, the circular thatched huts and the large fire, around which are grouped thirty or forty natives squatting in a circle, forming a scene interesting enough to any new-comer fresh from civilisation, but not a sight one would have thought to have arrested Easterbrook's attention, accustomed as he was to the veldt and its ways; but something must have struck him, for he walked his horse past the group, and cast a searching gaze over it as he passed. The natives seemed to take no notice of him, but Tom resumed his ride with a more preoccupied look, and one which evidently was not productive of ease of mind. 'Umph!' he soliloquised; 'now I wonder if there is anything in what Minnie fancied. I am not at all sure. I could have sworn I saw the Melinko, that infernal witch-doctor, who is always trying to stir up trouble; but I couldn't spot him again. And, besides, what, in the name of all that's diabolical, would he want there? I don't know. I wish Abe Ingram wasn't such a rough 'un; he's just the sort of man to have his niggers turn up rusty; and if they do, God help Minnie! But they wouldn't be doing anything yet; and I'll get a patrol round there to-morrow and chance it. What on earth made Ingram do such an idiotic thing as to thrash Sikomo, his head-boy? Heaven knows! And simply because he took a holiday to get married in—a thing every nigger does, on an average, three times a year. No, there's no velvet about Abe Ingram, and that's fact.'

As his soliloquies reached this point they were interrupted in a rather startling way. He had left the Kopje about a mile behind, and had entered a small clump of trees through which the track led. The darkness was very intense under their heavy foliage, and the moon merely shone in bands of cold light here and there, making the contrast all the stronger. He had reached about the centre of the clump when a figure sprang up and held the horse's head. The animal reared, and Tom, with the instinct due to practice, had his revolver ready instantaneously; but his fears are needless, for the figure cries: 'Don't shoot, Baas—me Lobeta;' and leading the horse, which is still quivering with fear, by the bridle, the man stands so that the moon's light shines full on his face.

Thus standing, he is seen to be a not unprepossessing specimen of a native; his only covering is a loin-cloth, and the moon's cold light reveals a form which many an English athlete would envy.

Easterbrook, who quickly recognises the man as an old servant, says:

'Why, Lobeta, what brings you here? I thought you had trekked to Buluwayo.'

'Yes, Baas; but trouble there—me come back, tell all black men rise, kill all white men up big river. Then I come tell you, Baas, or black men kill Missie Minnie. Big witch-doctor, Melinko, have *induba* down Urondi Kopje.'

'My God!' Tom says, 'then she was right;' and turning his horse, he digs his spurs into its side, and begins to ride back at full gallop; but the native still has his hand on the bridle, and says:

'Not so much quick, Baas, or black hear you.'

Tom, who is in an agony of dread, luckily grasps the native's idea, and pulling in his horse a bit, says:

'You are right, Lobeta; I shall have to leave the horse about a quarter of a mile away and get there on foot.' He relapses into thought for a minute, and then says:

'Look here, Lobeta; will you stand by me?'

'Yes, Baas; me friend,' says Lobeta.

'Then look here,' Tom says quickly; 'you know the spring on the side of the Kopje towards the rising sun?' Lobeta signified assent. 'Well, I shall leave the horse there with you, and you will hold it for me till I return with Minnie. If I don't come, and she comes alone, or anyhow, don't wait for me, but put her on its back, and take her as fast as you can to Inyati. Do you understand?'

'Yes, Baas.'

'If I don't come with her, when you get to Inyati tell the soldiers, and they may be in time.'

They have kept a bit off the track now, and are getting within sight of the Kopje as Tom gives his last instructions. All seems quiet as they approach the spring, and Tom slips off his horse, and taking off his boots, regardless of snakes, starts on his perilous journey. The light from the fire at the natives' kraal is still flickering on the western side of the Kopje, and Tom begins to crawl up the steep side and over the boulders which strew its face. Upwards he climbs as fast as he dare, stopping now and again

for a second or so with his heart in his mouth as he fancies he hears movements of natives in front. Half-way up he hears a vicious hiss as he disturbs some sleeping snake, but he takes no heed of it—all he fears are human foes; and he wends his way slowly up till he reaches the small uneven summit on which is perched the rough-built, corrugated-iron-covered little house which is his goal. He waits for a second or so, and seeing no trace of the natives, creeps to the western edge, and sees that they are still seated round the fire, evidently having no immediate intention of attack. Then swiftly making his way to the north side of the house, he knocks gently against the window of a room which is still lit up. A minute's breathless silence, and he knocks again. This time the window is darkened, and Ingram looks out, and is on the point of calling out, when Tom silences him with a quick and whispered 'Silence, man! Let me in at the door, and be careful not to show a light.'

Ingram, who in his young days has had plenty of experience in the American backwoods, quickly grasps the situation, and, closing the window, makes for the door. Silently opening it, he lets Tom in, quickly closing it again.

Ingram, who is as cool as a cucumber, looks at him when he is once inside, and says: 'Wa-al, sonny, what's wrong?'

Tom's appearance is not reassuring, for his socks and feet have been badly cut about in climbing over the boulders, and his face has several severe scratches from various bushes of 'waitabit' thorns he has had to negotiate; and Ingram's face grows graver as he listens to what he has to say. But Tom doesn't wait; he goes on: 'Look here, Ingram; is Minnie gone to bed?'

'Wa-al, lad, she had just gone when you knocked; but I guess she hasn't undressed yet.'

'That's right. Now listen to what you have to do,' Tom says. 'I left my horse with Lobeta at the spring; it is quite fresh, and is a strong animal. You must fetch Minnie, and make off by the eastern side of the house—the way I came. It is quite safe that way at present, and once you reach the spring you can make for Inyati at top speed. It is your only chance, as it's no earthly use trying to defend the house; there are too many blacks.'

Ingram looks at him, and says: 'And what are you going to do?'

Tom says: 'Oh, I shall be all right. I shall stay, and try and keep the enemy in check, so as to give you time to escape.'

Ingram looks at him, and says: 'Wa-al, durn me if you ain't grit, youngster. But I reckon I ain't going to close with that deal.'

'Don't be a fool, man,' Tom says. 'And, for God's sake, don't waste time; every minute is precious. Do you think I'd ever be able to look Minnie in the face again if I escaped and left you behind? You can just take it I've made up my mind;' and Tom's jaw sets in a square way which speaks of an immovable will.

Ingram studies him for a second, and says:

'Umph! I suppose I must give you best, sonny, but hang me if I like it. I never left a mate yet, and it feels real mean to do so now; and I'm blest if I would now if it weren't for the maid's sake.'

And the two men grasp hands, and Ingram goes off to call Minnie.

She had not started to undress when her father knocked at her door; and opening it immediately, she listened to his hurried directions.

There is no time wasted, and in a few minutes all is ready, and Minnie comes out of the room with a pale face ready for the journey. It is a bad minute or two for Tom, that parting. She on her part seems quite dazed, and doesn't seem to grasp the full situation; and though Tom himself knows that he has virtually doomed himself to certain death he takes care not to let her know the worst; but it is a hard struggle.

How they got down the Kopje none of them knew. It seemed as if they were bound to be discovered every minute and every step; but somehow, trying to go as noiselessly as possible, slipping, crawling, and stumbling, the bottom was reached at last, and then it was comparatively easy work to reach the spring.

Lobeta was waiting with the horse, and gave the welcome news that no blacks had come near him; and then the final parting came. Just one mad burning kiss and a wave of the hand, and then Tom began to feel the foretaste of death. Utterly callous, he walked back boldly up the Kopje without caring whether he was seen or not—that is to say, till half way-up; and then he remembered that his work was not yet done, and that he had, if possible, to prevent the blacks from knowing that Ingram and his daughter had escaped. After that, for the rest of the climb, he was as careful as the first time, and he eventually regained the house, without, so far as he could tell, having been noticed.

Once inside and the door barricaded, a wild desire for life seized him. The thought of Minnie, whom he had fairly won, being utterly lost to him seemed terrible, and the thought of having to sit and wait for death while she was still living and loving him maddened him, and life became very dear indeed. Minute after minute passed, and the long-drawn silence became unbearable. He had turned out the lamp and had barricaded the window as best he could, so that the only light vouchsafed to him was a shaft of the moon, which streamed through the one loophole he had left; and it was with his eye fixed at this narrow inlet that he sat, with his rifle across his knee, waiting in that terrible state of tension which only he who has been in similar desperate case can appreciate. Minute followed minute—hours they seemed to him; but in reality he hadn't been waiting for more than a quarter of an hour when something arrested his attention.

The edge of the plateau on which the house was built was clear-cut against the moonlit sky, and it was with his eyes fixed on this near horizon that he saw the body of a man slowly and stealthily silhouette itself against the sky, and almost simultaneously the edge of the plateau became alive with the forms of the attacking blacks, and a shower of assegais came hurling through the air, some discharged with such force that they pierced through the frail walls of the house.

At the first sight of the enemy all Tom's natural coolness and determination returned. It was almost as if he hailed their appearance as a relief; and to a certain extent it was. At any rate there was no suspense now—that awful suspense

which was nearly more than he could bear. It was cut and dried now, and in all human probability it would be all over in a few minutes, for it seemed impossible for any one to hold out much longer—the odds were too great. But the actuality of the danger seemed to brace Tom, as very often happens with men in whom the fighting instinct is strong; and it was with perfect *sang froid* that he raised his rifle and took careful aim at the native who was in advance.

Crack! the rifle rings out, and the man he aims at leaps into the air and falls prone. The others halt for a minute or two, evidently a bit staggered at the warmth of their reception; but it is only for a minute or so, and like a living wave, they sweep over the intervening space and surge up to the very walls of the house, breaking as they do so into a spray of flashing assegais. But the rifle has not been silent, and two more stark figures are lying on the plateau. Still there are plenty to take their place, and the frail door is already splitting beneath the heavy blows of their knob-kerries as Tom leaves his loophole and dashes into the passage ready for a last stand. As he does so a thought flashes through his brain. A desperate chance, to be sure, but a chance for all that; and the present time is not particularly fitted for much weighing as to its advisability, and Tom doesn't weigh at all; it is the first glimpse of hope he has had, and he intends to benefit if possible.

The natives are all busily engaged in bursting in the door, which, considering its frailty, has hung out very well; and giving a parting shot through a gap in one of its timbers—a shot answered by a shrill scream which tells its own tale—he darts across to the kitchen. As he does so an assegai flashes along the passage and quivers in the opposite wall. The door is evidently giving way fast, and Tom feverishly drags the table under what is seen to be a small trap-door in the ceiling. To jump on the table and thrust back the bolt is a thing of a second, and the next moment he is out on the slope of the roof and sliding to the ground.

He is none too soon. Almost simultaneously with his reaching the ground a crash and a rush bespeak the fact that the door has given way, and that the blacks are in the house. Once on the ground, Tom dashes off like a deerhound, away from the house in the direction of the native kraals. Certainly it seems like running into the arms of the enemy; but there is a method in Tom's madness, and luck is with him. All the natives are evidently up at the house, and he dashes down the side of the Kopje unchallenged. But though there is nobody to bar his flight, he does not get off without being seen, and half-way down the Kopje he is spotted by the enemy, and the pack are quickly in full chase. Downward he flies, leaping from boulder to boulder, crashing through the thorn-bushes, which take strips of his clothing and flesh away; onwards, madly plunging down with the hue-and-cry hard after him, and with the blood streaming from his lacerated feet and legs, with his teeth hard set and his breath coming short and quick through his nostrils—verily a mad race; but there is death behind him, and Tom strains every nerve, till at last—it has seemed miles to him—at last his goal is reached.

A strange place indeed to choose for safety—a bare plateau of rock with one small lean-to shed on it—a shed which one good kick would bring in a heap to the ground, much less would it afford shelter from the howling mob now but a few hundred yards away. But it is not the shed which is Tom's goal. Dashing past it, he stops short a few yards farther on. On first appearance there seems less chance of safety here than in the shed; for there is nothing but a rough windlass and a hole in the ground, neither of which would be prone to inspire hope in a stranger. But Tom seems satisfied, and doesn't waste time once he has arrived there. Attached to the windlass by a thick cable-rope is an iron bucket. Quickly placing his rifle in it, he swings it out over the shaft and lets it down. The natives are rapidly coming up now, and directly the bucket touches the bottom he hitches the rope, and, seizing it by his hands and curling his legs round it, begins to let himself slide down. Down he slides, now striking one side of the shaft, now the other, as the rope twists round and jerks about with his weight. Down and yet down, with the mouth of the shaft getting smaller and smaller, while the coarse rope cuts grooves in his legs and the palms of his hands get raw. Downwards till it seems that the bottom will never be reached. Will he reach it in time? The blacks must be nearly at the mouth now. 'Ha! I was nearly off that time,' he murmurs as he strikes the side of the shaft more heavily than before; but he still manages to keep his hold on the rope. 'Thank Heaven, here's the bottom at last,' and seizing his rifle, he makes a dash for the mouth of the cutting, which strikes off at right angles with the main shaft; and not a second too soon, for, as he gets about ten feet from the bottom of the shaft—crash!—a large boulder of quartz comes hurtling through the air, smashing from side to side of the shaft, and striking the bottom, flies into fragments, pieces whizzing unpleasantly close to Tom's head. This piece is followed by a cascade of smaller ones, which clash and crash against one another in their flight through the air, and fly like grape-shot when they strike the bottom. But Tom has got out of range by now, and, utterly exhausted, falls flat on his face, while the incessant rattle and roar of the pieces of quartz the natives hurl down thunders away harmlessly. But after a minute, or two the falling pieces become fewer, and gradually stop altogether, with the exception of a solitary piece which now and then booms down the shaft. Tom pulls himself together and sits up. He is not out of the wood yet, he knows. The natives may think they have put an end to him; but, on the other hand, they may not, and it is quite possible that some of their number may venture down the shaft to make sure of their work; and Tom becomes watchfulness itself as he fixes his eyes on the streak of moonlight visible from the bottom of the shaft. The bucket has been battered into a shapeless mass, while the rope has been severed by one of the blocks of quartz, and the end dangles freely; and Tom fixes his eyes on the end of the swinging rope in a state of extreme tension.

Slowly the minutes pass by. The minutes grow into hours, and yet the rope still swings free. He is rapidly getting terribly stiff, and his

hands and torn legs and feet give him great pain, but he doesn't take his eyes off the rope. He is growing hypochondriacal, too, and he watches the rope swinging to and fro, and thinks, 'Ah! now it will touch the side. No—then it will next time,' and so on. Then he gets drowsy and his eyes shut, and he hastily opens them with a shudder lest just at that moment some native should have reached the bottom. But, do what he can, the drowsiness gets worse and worse, and he is rapidly dozing off into sleep when a small piece of quartz rattles down the shaft. There is only one piece, but it is sufficient for Tom, who is all awake again immediately; but nothing follows, and he is beginning to think it is a false alarm when he is struck by the motion of the rope. Instead of swinging slowly to and fro as before it has a curious jerky movement—a movement which makes Tom shift his rifle to his shoulder and take steady aim at the rope. There is no doubt what causes that curious vibration; there is a man coming down hand-over-hand. It seems ages while Tom watches the rope and waits for his enemy; but gradually the movement of the rope becomes more and more jerky, till at last the figure of a native cautiously swarming down the rope appears in the moonlit area at the bottom of the shaft. He must be a brave man to venture alone on such an errand; and Tom, strange to say, feels a certain amount of compunction at shooting him, as it were, at a disadvantage; but it is no time for thoughts like these, and in a second all is over. As the rifle rings out the figure falls like a log from the rope without a movement, and Tom is left alone with a dead body.

The night wears on, and Tom, whose drowsiness has been satisfactorily dispelled, sits watching the bottom of the pit hour by hour; but, with the exception of stray pieces of quartz which now and again come plunging down the shaft, the hours pass without any further attack, and he begins to think that his chance of escape is comparatively good, as help from Inyati is pretty sure to arrive by midday, if he can manage to keep the enemy at bay till then. But suddenly a great horror seizes him. What is that which has just fallen with a rustling thud at the bottom, and what is that smell which begins to pervade the tunnel? The terrible truth forces itself upon him—they are going to suffocate him. Fool, never to have thought of that! Fool—thrice fool to have fallen into such a death-trap! Rather—ten thousand times rather had he stayed and fought to the last at the house than such a death as this. The brushwood and grass give out dense volumes of smoke, and Tom retires as far into the tunnel as the working permits. He does so mechanically, as he doesn't have the slightest hope of living through it; it is only putting off death for a short space at the most.

But time goes on, and though the heat is intense and the smoke now and again drifts thinly round him, making him cough and choke with its pungent fumes, yet it doesn't seem to get any worse, and gradually hope begins to spring up again in his breast; and as minute by minute rolls on and he still manages to breathe, the conviction is forced upon him that there must be some fault or other in the strata of the quartz, through which some air must percolate, thereby

causing a draught towards the mouth of the shaft.

For about half-an-hour the fire burns, and then the smoke begins to get less dense towards the bottom of the pit, and gradually through the murk Tom can see the faint light from the shaft piercing the gloom; and in about an hour's time the tunnel is comparatively free of smoke. Tom creeps to the bottom of the shaft, and sees that the rope has been burnt away up to a height of about twenty feet from the bottom, so that it is scarcely probable that any native will venture down to make sure as to whether he is dead or not. Besides, they are pretty certain to be confident that he could not have lived through the suffocating smoke of the fire; and so he resigns himself to wait in hope of help from Inyati. Failing that, he knows he will have a terrible business to reach the top without help; but, having gone through so much, he is fairly hopeful of eventual escape.

Once, as he is sitting down within a yard or so of the bottom, he has a narrow escape, as a stone dropped by some native comes crashing down, and narrowly misses him as it rebounds with tremendous force; but, barring that, the time goes by uneventfully, though, as Tom said afterwards, he really thought the last two hours of waiting were the worst time he spent. He was quite worn out; and as hour after hour passed, and no help came, he gradually began to get hopeless and think that he would be entombed for life.

But at last the faint echo of a shot reached his ears, followed quickly by several more, and he knew that help had come at last. The shots came gradually nearer, and Tom fired his rifle in hope of attracting attention; but it was not until he had fired about a dozen times that at last he heard a hail from the mouth of the shaft, and looking up, saw one of his own troop. After that he was very quickly got out with the help of a spare coil of rope; but he fainted right off when he reached the top, and had to be very freely dosed with brandy before he could stagger to his feet, and it was many a day before he recovered entirely from the effects of that terrible night.

That he married Minnie, and made his pile, of course goes without saying; but that, though very interesting in its way, has nothing to do with this story.

ABOUT ROCKETS.

THERE are few sights more ludicrous to look down upon than the sea of upturned faces awaiting the bursting of a sky-rocket at a pyrotechnical display, and no sounds more ridiculous than the drawn-out Oh—h—h of the thousands present as it ascends, and the satisfied Ah—h—h when it explodes and sheds its multicoloured radiance upon them. To the rocket as a firework the knowledge of the many is limited: its only point of interest its beauty; though some few may risk a conjecture as to the height it reaches. On this point observations have been made at various times by measuring the angle of altitude from some point at a known distance, the only data necessary for a simple trigonometrical calculation,

from which the largest have been found to reach 1260 yards, equal to about eleven times the height of St Paul's.

A rocket, briefly described, is a cardboard or metal cylinder filled, excepting a hollow cone in the centre of the base, with a combustible mixture of the nature of gunpowder; the lower end, that to be lighted, is closed with millboard or touch-paper; the upper fitted with a conical cap whose contents vary with the effect to be produced, whether stars, balls, rains, serpents, destructive missiles, &c. On ignition the reaction produced by the burning of the composition which takes place round the interior of the hollow urges the rocket forward or upward, the stick acting as a rudder to maintain the required direction during flight as well as to counteract any tendency to overturning.

The explosive nature of saltpetre mixed with charcoal was apparently known to the Chinese many centuries before the Christian era; fireworks of various kinds were used by them at a very early date. Ancient Greeks and Romans seem to have thrown in warfare arrows or other projectiles carrying a combustible mixture which contained, among other ingredients, sulphur and pitch, almost unextinguishable by water. At the siege of Constantinople, 673 A.D., the Greeks destroyed the Arab fleet by means of liquid fire discharged from tubes. The Saracens employed a similar agent against the crusaders, and during the fourteenth century this so-called *Greek fire* was constantly used throughout the West of Europe, both in siege and defence. In spite, however, of their employment in war for so many centuries, rockets were of little practical utility until the improvements introduced by Sir William Congreve in 1804, among which was the fixing of the stick, up till then attached to the side, in prolongation of the axis, thereby increasing the accuracy of flight. These were superseded in 1867 by Hale's rockets, which require no stick, an ingenious arrangement at the base imparting a rotatory motion such as is given to elongated projectiles by rifling.

In October 1806 the rocket was for the first time employed by us in an attack on Boulogne conducted by Commodore Owen, and its destructive effect demonstrated. In those employed on that occasion the pasteboard case had been replaced by one of sheet iron; each weighed 32lb. and contained as much explosive composition as a ten-inch shell, with a range of 3000 yards. Its power having thus been satisfactorily established, it was further employed in the expedition against Copenhagen in 1807, in the Walcheren expedition, and on the coast of Spain in 1809, when twelve hundred of them were distributed in different parts of the rigging of the ships. All these showed it to be so powerful an auxiliary to artillery that shortly afterwards a rocket-troop was formed, which did such effective service at the battle of Leipzig as to lead to the formation,

on 1st January 1814, of a regular rocket-corps. These incendiary missiles were thus referred to in a number of the *United Service Journal* sixty years ago: 'Ninety-six artillerymen, with twenty-four thirty-two-pounder carriages or frames, can fire in one minute seventy-two of these terrific engines of destruction, each ranging from a mile and a half to two miles, and carrying from five to twelve pounds of a burning composition which continues to burn for several minutes wherever it falls, over which water has no influence, and which, from the mephitic vapour which it exhales, cannot be approached so as to be extinguished by any other means. A twelve-pounder rocket laid on the ground and discharged without a tube, by simply applying a match to the vent, will run along the ground four or five hundred yards, seldom rising higher than a man's head, and thus, alternately rising and falling, will continue its course with such effect as, after ranging 1200 yards, to pierce through twenty feet of turf, and explode on the other side, scattering in all directions the carbine balls with which it is loaded.'

Their main advantages consist in their lightness, facility of transport, and the terror they excite among horses and savages, where their moral effect is tremendous. They have been truly described as 'ammunition without ordnance—the soul of artillery without the body;' but as it is impossible with them to obtain anything like strict accuracy of fire, they are only serviceable against objects covering a considerable extent of ground. Moreover, owing to their slow flight, they are very susceptible to the action of gravity, wind, and other accidental causes of deviation; they have sometimes been so deflected as to come back at the troops who fired them, and, from the fact of the composition burning away during flight, the position of the centre of gravity, and consequently their balance, is constantly changing.

Rockets are, however, made to serve a more humane purpose—namely, that of saving life at sea, by conveying a line to a stranded vessel by which the shipwrecked crew is enabled to reach shore. This clever device of the late Colonel Boxer, R.A., is made in two lengths, so arranged that when the first section has expended its force, the second is ignited just as the projectile has reached the highest point of the trajectory, giving it an additional impulse. Buoyant rockets also form part of the equipment of our lighthouses, as a means of communication when the weather is too rough to allow of the near approach of boats; they are covered with cork and furnished with a cork head, and will carry a one-and-a-quarter-inch coir rope to a distance of a hundred yards, and possess sufficient buoyancy to float with the rope attached.

The great height to which rockets ascend was soon recognised as affording a valuable means of signalling, either to serve as a warning or in case of distress, for which purpose they are divided into three classes, known as *Signal*, *Light*, and *Sound*. The signal rockets display from twenty to thirty coloured stars, red, blue, white, or green, their cases being painted the colour the stars will show in burning; and dogwood charcoal being used, as it gives off more sparks, making a brilliant tail. The light rocket carries in its

head a single star of magnesium-light composition which burns for about fifteen seconds; while the sound rockets, intended to give signals from lighthouses and lightships, have a two-ounce disc of dry gun-cotton coated with paraffin and a small tin tube containing fulminate of mercury as a detonator. Rockets have also been proposed as auxiliaries to lighthouses during fog; those of one station to shed a different-coloured light from those of another, from which mariners might know their whereabouts.

As a rough means of determining the difference of longitude between two places, a rocket has been fired from some intermediate spot such that its explosion was visible from both, the instant of which, as indicated by a chronometer at each station regulated to show the mean time, giving the required difference; but as the highest can only be seen at an extreme distance of forty miles, the places could not be more than eighty miles apart.

THE TOWER GARDEN.

A HERITAGE from some far time,
The rampart garden should betoken
Romantic mysteries—or crime—
When heads were lost, and hearts were broken;

When captive souls in bodies burned
In eagerness for Time's effacement;
And eyes in anguish oft were turned
To gruesome sights from yonder casement.

Then bloomed, as now, in transient hue,
At morn, at noon, with sweet persistence,
The nurtured buds of grace that drew
From prison-soil a lorn existence;

Or, viewed from some sad sombre cell,
To eyes with twilight dim o'ertaken,
They seemed in changeeful growth to tell
The bitterness of Hope forsaken.

The fateful Nightshade's purple bloom;
A splash of Tulips, crimson-spotted;
And Rue and Henbane, steeped in gloom,
By sudden mists of tears out-blotted.

Oh, bygone tears! Forgotten grief!
The perished woe of man or maiden,
As traceless as the driven leaf
That downward flutters, tempest-laden.

And now, as it had never been,
Of sorrow unto sorrow ended,
A hush has fallen o'er the scene—
The fading Past and Present blended.

So long ago, in added years,
So brief the retrospective stages
Of human hopes and joys and fears—
The yielded lesson of the ages.

JAMES CLEUGH.

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THE YUKON GOLDFIELDS.

IN his annual report for 1895, the Governor of Alaska stated that the 'valley of the Yukon River is without doubt the most extensive field of placer mines discovered since the finding of gold in California.' Other expressions of the same decided opinion have been uttered occasionally during the past ten years by numerous persons whose knowledge of mining operations as carried on in that remote part of the world has enabled them to speak with some degree of authority; and startling evidence of the substantial accuracy of these predictions is furnished by the news which has recently come to us of the discovery of vast placer deposits on the Klondyke or Klondak Creek, a tributary of the Yukon. No man with a pretence of discretion and an acquaintance with the electric air of exaggeration that invests a rich mining camp would dream of accepting everything that has been told us of the yield of the Klondyke claims or of the auriferous possibilities of that particular locality. But the presence of gold is incontestable, and the probabilities are that it exists in very considerable quantities.

One may be pardonably sceptical in accepting stories, but there is no room for doubt in the face of a yield that is already large and is rapidly growing. People smiled incredulously when it was reported in 1849 that gold in bucketsful was being picked up on the American River in California by all who were so lucky as to be there; but there was no withstanding the proof offered by the enormous quantity of dust that poured into San Francisco to be smelted. Similarly with the Yukon. The placers of this region have trebled their yield in the past two years; and, making a very liberal deduction for exaggeration, it seems clear that the output for the current year will be something between six and ten times that of 1895. Moreover, next season is likely to make a still better showing; for though there has been plenty of activity this year, the news of phenomenal successes came too late to enable any considerable number of adventurers to reach the

camp, seeing that the season proper is only of three months' duration, and that the journey occupies six weeks or more. By next year, again, the Dominion Government hope to improve the means of communication from the south and from the west; and this, by facilitating access to travellers and to provisions (now very scarce), will induce a larger influx of miners. Altogether the Yukon valley promises to become a very important mining centre—presupposing the existence of gold in the quantities stated not by miners but by prosaic geological surveyors.

The Yukon district of the Canadian North-west Territory has an area of 192,000 square miles, of which 150,800 miles or thereabouts are included in the watershed of the Yukon River. This river provides the main drainage of the whole region. It passes from British into American territory at a point 1600 miles from the sea, and the 200 miles of its course in Canada receives the waters of all the most important of its tributaries, each of which has an extensive subsidiary river-system spreading out fan-wise towards the south-east, the east, and the north-east. Placer gold has been worked most consistently hitherto on the American side of the boundary in the vicinity of Circle City, a place of four hundred wooden huts and the inevitable dancing halls and drinking saloons, which is reached during the short summer by stern-wheel steamers from the mouth of the Yukon in the Behring Sea. But prospecting has been carried on fitfully on the British side for nearly twenty years. In 1872 a couple of Canadians penetrated as far north as the Liard River, and six years later other wandering miners appeared on the Lewes River, which runs into the Yukon. They met with no conspicuous success on the Lewes. Gold was found from the first in the bars of this river and its affluents; but the quantity was not sufficiently remunerative, having regard to the conditions under which work must be carried on. In 1881 paying placers were discovered along the Big Salmon River, which is a tributary of the Lewes. Shortly afterwards camps were established

on the Teslinto River, which flows from Teslin Lake into the Lewes a little south of the Big Salmon; and on the Upper Pelly River, which forks off from the Yukon at the same point as the Lewes, and flows east-south-east. Penetrating still farther north, miners in 1835 struck deposits on the Stewart River, and late in the following year pushed on past the mouth of the Klondyke to Forty Mile Creek, where 'coarse gold' in very considerable quantities was found. In the next season the entire mining population was concentrated at Forty Mile, and there the majority appear to have stayed until last year, when some new blood, attracted from the mines of California, Oregon, and Washington Territory by the growing evidences of the richness of the Yukon, appeared at the camp; and, instead of being content to work the Forty Mile Creek, went in search of virgin ground. Forty Mile Creek is a river 360 miles or so in length, and had been prospected for about 100 miles from its point of junction with the Yukon by the ever-increasing army of miners, who assert that they have found gold almost everywhere along it as well as in tributary gulches. Dr Dawson, Director of the Geological Survey of Canada, who was at the head of an expedition sent to the Yukon country in 1887 to ascertain the exact proportion of truth to fiction in the many stories circulated of the productiveness of Forty Mile and the other mining grounds, says that the amount of gold taken from this one stream while he was there was at least 75,000 dollars. That is ten years ago. Forty Mile is what the miners call a 'bedrock creek'—one in which there is no great depth of drift or detrital deposits below the level of the actual stream. Down to the last three years it was the only locality which yielded coarse and nugget gold, though it was predicted by Dr Dawson that, from the extremely wide distribution of 'fine gold,' many more like it remained to be discovered.

Forty Mile has now been virtually emptied, its population having been attracted to Klondyke, which lies on the other bank of the Yukon, fifty miles to the south-east. The pioneer was one George Cormack, who in August of last year made a rich find of coarse gold on Bonanza Creek, a tributary of the Klondyke. His 'prospect' showed three dollars to the pan. Such a return, equal to about 3000 dollars a-day, with the help of a single labourer at fifteen dollars a-day, was better than anything ever done at Forty Mile or at any other known mining-ground; and consequently there was an immediate stampede to the new diggings. Men left their old claims, and with a blanket, an axe, and some 'hard tack,' prospected on the new creek, and staked every inch of available claims. Later comers went farther up the Klondyke, and explored the Bonanza, Bear, Gold Bottom, and other creeks. Though the luck has varied at these different centres, it appears on all of them to have been larger than on the older mining-grounds, while on some the yield has been phenomenal. There is no reason to suppose that even the Klondyke is the very richest of the rivers which flow down from the Rockies and carry with them the drift from the auriferous rocks. Between the left bank of the Yukon and this mountain range is a vast region absolutely untrodden by man. It contains, in the upper reaches of the Stewart and

Macmillan Rivers, hundreds of creeks quite as favourable for the reception of floating particles of gold as the Klondyke. And even this river remains unexplored beyond the place which the Indians know as Too-much-gold Creek. Dr Dawson estimates that the auriferous alluvium in and around the Yukon watershed is spread over an area of a round quarter of a million square miles. This estimate takes no account of the possibilities of lode-mining in the hills where the quartz veins exist. The placers of the Klondyke appear, as we have hinted, to have their origin in the Rockies; but no scientific investigation has yet been made with the idea of locating the veins, and of ascertaining their approximate extent. But a United States Geological Survey party last year found in a range of small mountains situated between the Yukon and the Tanana, and crossing the Alaskan boundary in a north-easterly direction not far from Forty Mile Creek, evidences of quartz gold which persisted for over 500 miles and gave promise of the presence of the metal in 'well-nigh unlimited' quantities. This range joins the Rocky Mountains a little north of the Arctic Circle. Quartz-mining is not likely to attract attention just at present. The auriferous veins are workable only on the upper slopes; and apart from the impossibility of conveying the necessary machinery into the district with the existing means of communication, enterprise on a new gold-producing ground is never attracted to lode-mining until the placers become too thin for profitable manipulation. That branch imposes harder individual exertions; the returns are not so rapid even if they are more sure; and the outlay for very indifferent apparatus is too heavy; while it is only by the use of the more modern methods that full extraction is possible. The placers of the district are sufficiently rich to tax all the resources of all the miners who are likely to be attracted to them at present, and the promise of profit which they hold out is enough to keep their energies concentrated upon them to the exclusion of vein gold for a long time to come.

Details of actual accomplishments this past season will serve to supplement and corroborate what we have said in general terms as to the auriferous possibilities on the Klondyke region. They come on the authority of Mr W. Ogilvie, the Dominion Geological Surveyor, who made the first definite announcement to his government on the subject. Speaking of Bonanza Creek, this gentleman says that from five to seven dollars has been the average yield per pan of dirt treated on one claim, and he estimates that, at the lower of these figures, the value of the gold on this claim alone is 4,000,000 dollars. On the Eldorado Creek one pan has given 204 dollars; another 212 dollars, and a third 216 dollars, and though these are certainly exceptional takes, many pans have ranged from 10 to 50 dollars. These results are not peculiar to the two districts named; they are typical of the whole Klondyke River district.

Both the Canadian and American Governments have decided to do by next season everything in their power to improve the means of access to the Yukon valley. At present the disabilities are great. There are two recognised routes, the one by stern-wheel steamers from the mouth of the Yukon; the other by way of the Lynn

Canal, the Chilkoot Pass, or the White Pass, and the long succession of lakes and rivers that ultimately flow into the Yukon. The first involves a sea-journey from Vancouver or Victoria along the coast into the Behring Sea, and an 1800 miles' trip along the great river. As a rule, vessels cannot enter Norton Sound until July 1; and it is seldom that more than two journeys are possible in one season. Besides, the river service does not extend beyond Fort Constantine; so that the upper and richer part of the country must be reached from thence by canoe.

The second route is a little under 800 miles, and though rapids are numerous and dangerous on the rivers, the most arduous part of the journey is the 30 miles over the pass and the coast mountains to the head-waters of the Lewes River. A practicable trail is understood to exist from the south near Teslin Lake, and the authorities say it might be opened up by a wagon-road as far as Pelly, whence supplies could be forwarded by boat or scow. The Canadian Government favour the establishment of land communication with the head of Teslin Lake and of water communication from there with Klondyke, Forty Mile, and Circle City—a total distance of 800 miles, of which 600 miles would be in Canadian territory. A great advantage about this route is that the water-run is uninterrupted, and that small steamers of 150 tons could ply along the whole course and make at least three journeys against a maximum of two by the St Michael's route. But even the best of these alternative ways of reaching the goldfields is not to be recommended to those who like to travel for the good of their health and are averse to roughing it. Miners are not squeamish on the score of comfort; but more than one of them has declared that not even the certainty of earning a thousand dollars a day would be inducement sufficient to take them again to the Yukon. Not the least of the disabilities is the paucity of provisions and the famine prices that rule for such as there may be for sale. Supplies go by the St Michael's route—that is, by way of the sea and the river for the whole distance; and as the second steamer is frequently frozen up and lost before she has gone many hundred miles from the coast, it follows that those in the camps are sometimes compelled to endure the severities of the winter on a short allowance of food. Every miner who knows anything at all about the diggings is careful to provide himself with a reserve of food to help out the supplies in the camps; and this means a considerable addition to the inevitable miner's 'swag.' It is a regrettable fact that, while the overland and overlake route is lined with the graves of those who have succumbed to the dangers and privations of the journey, the neighbourhood of the mining-grounds is plentifully bestrewn with the graves of those who, in the midst of gold enough to buy up everything in sight in a civilised community, have literally died from starvation.

Not only is it sometimes difficult to exist on the diggings, but there is trouble in working the ground. Klondyke and the other contiguous camps are situated within two degrees of the Arctic Circle, and ages of severe and protracted winters have frozen the earth so effectually that the sun of the short summer avails to thaw it

only a few inches from the surface. Though in a fair way to be partially obviated, this drawback must always count for much. At first it occasioned something like despair, because the methods customarily employed in washing out gold proved to be completely inefficacious. Picks were found to be of no use. The heaviest blow made little more impression than it would have made on a solid block of granite. Experiments were made with dynamite, but a heavy shot resulted only in blowing out the 'pothole,' and had no effect whatever in loosening the surrounding gravel. Hydraulic pumps were equally futile, their copious streams serving only to bore a hole in the banks against which they were directed. The general mode of procedure now is to have a big log fire burning overnight on the claim. A fire suffices to thaw a couple of inches of soil by the morning. This dirt is promptly removed, and the fire lighted over the lower layer, until the whole of the dirt in a claim has been loosened and thrown on to the dump. By the time the spring returns there are many tons of stuff ready to be treated, and though it has frozen again, the particles are separated and the sun renders it workable. The whole of the summer is therefore spent in treating the auriferous earth accumulated during the preceding winter. It is a primitive device, but it is the best available with the present limited resources of the camps. The fact that such good results have followed the adoption of such an unsatisfactory mode of operation may be taken as further proof of the existence of gold in considerable quantities.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE first thing Doonya did after seeing the messenger disappear up the ladder which led from her tiny cabin into the open air was to faint away. Ivan's wife found her on the floor a few moments later, and attended to her—gave her tea and placed her upon the hard seat which formed the only bed in the place, and covered her up with every available article of clothing belonging to herself and her husband, including Ivan's sheepskin. Yet even this last covering, than which nothing can be much warmer, did not prevent her from shivering all night long. Sleep was out of the question, for Doonya felt that the hand of death was upon her. She had never belonged to or even sympathised with the extreme branch of the brotherhood. When she first became a member of this society there had been no idea of a Department of Violence; it had developed gradually and secretly, and the leadership of the community had become vested in the hands of those who advocated terrorism and an actively violent programme. There were many members who, like Doonya herself, would gladly have resigned their membership under existing conditions; but this was, by the new code of rules, impossible. According to the laws of the brotherhood as drawn up by Karaool and his friends of the inner circle, there was but one event that could sever a once-admitted member from his connection with the community, and that was death. But for this Doonya would long ago have left the society, for she had no sympathy with violence of any

kind whatever. Hence, when Fedia handed her the green ticket, of whose terrible import she was well aware, Doonya knew that the only alternative to self-effacement or death at the hands of a fellow-member would be the commission of some horrible crime as the executioner of the society.

Through the terrible hours of that long night Doonya shivered and tossed, and moaned and wept, and counted the minutes that lay between her and death. The possibility of accepting the alternative to be proposed at the meeting never for one moment occurred to her: she might take her own life, but she would assuredly never assist in the taking of another's. It was her own approaching end that weighed so heavily upon poor Doonya's spirit. The little bottle placed by Fedia upon the stove contained her death-warrant; all that the word 'life' now signified for her was a short series of miserable hours such as these, comprising, perhaps, one day or so—and then an end. And why? Because she had had the misfortune to be attacked by the police for belonging to a community which she loathed. And the bitterness of it all lay in the fact that just now, but a few days since, she had begun to value life for the first time, and to feel that there was at last a chance that brighter days might yet dawn for her in the future—days that were not monotonous and miserable, as hers had been so long as she could remember; but perhaps hopeful and happy—such days as made up the lives of other girls more fortunate than she.

And now all her hopes were to be ended by a sip from that horrible little bottle on the stove; which was a merciful little bottle, however, from one point of view; because, but for this, there would be the terror of worse things—two alternatives, both by far more horrible than self-effacement.

Doonya scarcely slept a wink all night, and the few moments of unconsciousness into which she fell now and again were spoiled by the exaggerations which ran riot in her brain throughout her so-called slumber.

Philipof arrived in the morning, radiant and happy in the thought of seeing his new friend—a thought which monopolised his mind, just at present, at every moment of his absence from her side; but when, after a cautious look around, he descended into the cabin, he scarcely recognised the girl.

'Doonya!' he cried, 'what is the matter?'

He might well ask what had occurred to account for the change in her appearance, for the past night of anguish had made an old woman of her, for the time being.

For answer poor Doonya covered her face with her hands, bent her head down over the stove, and burst into a passion of tears.

Philipof was terribly shocked. 'Doonya,' he said very gently, 'my poor friend, has anything happened?'

Doonya fumbled in her pocket and produced the green ticket, which she held out to him with one hand, while she continued to hide her face with the other.

'See,' she sobbed, 'this has happened; it is enough.'

Philipof gazed at the little piece of green-bordered parchment in bewilderment. 'I don't understand,' he said. 'What is it? What does

No. 19 mean? There is nothing upon it but the number. What is there in this to distress you, Doonya?'

Then Doonya sat up and dried her tears; it was a relief to her even to speak to this man, were it only to tell him of her misery. She would be sure of sympathy at all events! And Doonya began and told Sasha the whole tale of how the brotherhood to which she belonged, originally a society wedded to peaceful methods, had become by degrees drawn into connection with branches of the new community of Nihilists, until the members found themselves dominated by a party of terror, whose strength lay in the cruel and secret organisation by which they were able to make cat's-paws of those members who happened to have incurred displeasure or to have become really or apparently dangerous to the community. Deeds of violence were plotted by the inner circle, and those who were unfortunate enough to have become, in their opinion, dangerous or offensive were told off for the execution of their abominable enterprises. Should such members refuse to undertake the duty assigned to them, they were quickly 'removed.' The green ticket was the symbol by which the inner circle communicated to its victims that sentence had gone out against them. The green ticket had been handed to her last night.

Philipof ground his teeth with rage. So these rascals had outwitted him after all, and his precautions had all been unavailing!

But presently he behaved in an extraordinary manner, surprising poor Doonya very much. He suddenly burst into a roar of laughter, and then turned grave and then laughed again. His mirth seemed most untimely and unexpected, and Doonya began to cry in the shock of the demonstration. Then Philipof was all penitence. He rose and took Doonya in his arms and pressed her to his heart and kissed her lips. Doonya, surprised, but with a sense of delicious peace and protectedness, rested her head upon his shoulder and sobbed quietly, waiting for him to speak.

'Forgive me, Doonya,' he said at length. 'You thought me heartless; but God knows I am not that. I could not help laughing. I long to laugh again at the sheer impudence of these men! And so they take it for granted that you will choose one of their precious alternatives?'

'Certainly they do,' sobbed poor Doonya. 'If I refuse, you see, they choose one for me.'

'Yes, I see,' said Philipof; 'and so, no doubt, you have chosen for yourself, rather than leave the matter to them?'

'Of course,' said Doonya, drying her tears and speaking more calmly; she was already feeling a warm glow of confidence in this man, though he had said little, as yet, to help her in this particular difficulty. 'I have chosen the way I shall go.'

'Which?' asked Philipof.

'Oh! can you doubt?' cried the poor girl, with a great sob. 'Of course not—not to be stabbed by their horrid daggers, and of course not to do their murdering for them, as they would make me if they could; that would be worse still.'

'Well?' said Philipof. 'Go on, my poor Doonya; there remains'—

'That little bottle,' said Doonya, faintly indicating it.

Philipof snatched up the tiny glass flagon and sniffed at the contents. A sickening aromatic odour passed through the little cabin, though he had scarcely removed the cork by a hair's-breadth, and though the hatchway at the top of the ladder was open to the air.

'Ah!' he said, 'chloroform. Capital! So you have chosen this?'

'Yes,' assented Doonya, still very faintly.

Philipof took the little bottle and pocketed it. 'Now, Doonya,' he said, 'first of all a question: if—all goes well with both of us in this matter, as I trust that it shall, and if I succeed in getting the better of this precious brotherhood of yours and in escaping out of the country, must I go alone?'

'What do you mean?' murmured Doonya. 'There is no possibility for me to escape the brotherhood; you little know the terrible omnipotence of the inner circle; but you, O Gospodin Philipof! you are good and brave and clever—fly, I entreat you, while you can! Listen; I will tell you a way: hide, as I did, on one of these lighters and go on board the English steamer, and escape. Nothing can save me, for they will not lose sight of me for a moment from now until—until the day after to-morrow; but you can escape, you *must* escape—for my sake!' Doonya threw herself upon Philipof's shoulder and cried as though her heart were breaking.

'My poor, foolish Doonya!' said Sasha, pressing her fondly to his heart; 'my poor girl, that is the very way we shall both escape, eventually. But we have many things to do before that; and first of all, let me choose one out of their pretty little set of alternatives. I choose the meeting. You shall go to the meeting, my Doonya—that is the first point—and find out what it is they wish you to do.'

'But, Gospodin Philipof'—

'No; call me Sasha.'

'Sasha, then, and my beloved, I will go if you bid me; but I cannot, even at your bidding, undertake to shed blood!' Doonya shuddered in his strong arms.

'That you shall never do, Doonya,' he said, so convincingly that the girl felt strong and confident in a moment. 'But to the meeting, my dear, you must certainly go—that much is necessary—fie! Doonya, you would not disobey the mandate of the brotherhood? Go, like a good girl, and do as you are bid, and then come back and tell me all about it. It will be time enough to decide about this little bottle when you return. While at the meeting, do not either accept or reject that which they have to propose; say you will think it over. That is our first move. For the rest, be brave, my Doonya, and we will yet defeat this precious inner circle!'

(To be continued.)

THE CAUSE OF DUST EXPLOSIONS.

IN a recent article (*Journal*, No. 663) we gave some account of the after-effects of explosions of coal-dust in mines. It did not come within the scope of that article to explain how such explosions come about. That preliminary question is, however, an interesting one; and as many of our readers, no doubt, find it difficult to understand how mere dust of any kind can cause destructive explosions, it may be worth while to discuss the matter a little.

It should at the outset be clearly understood that it is not merely coal-dust that will cause explosions. The dust of any organic material—that is any animal or vegetable material—will do it. The great liability of flour-mills to explosive outbursts has long been so clearly recognised that fire insurance companies have been accustomed to rate such property as exceptionally dangerous, and to be insured only on high premiums. There are many now living who will have a vivid recollection of the terrible disaster at the Tradeston Mills in Glasgow, in 1872. Professor Macadam, who investigated the cause of the accident, says: 'All the processes were proceeding in the most regular and harmonious manner, and yet, in a space of time not greater than what is required to describe it—in a few seconds—two explosions took place, the mill was in ruins, the debris was simultaneously fired, the site of the mill was a roaring furnace; and, lamentable to relate, more than a dozen human beings were killed.' Six years later, at the Washburn Corn Mills, in Minneapolis, reputed to be the largest corn-mills in the world, an outburst took place resulting in the loss of eighteen lives and £200,000 worth of property, no less than five other mills having been involved in the disaster. Here also there were two explosions at the outset, and this fact illustrates a danger peculiar to those dust outbursts. A first explosion may be small and comparatively unimportant; but if it is powerful enough to give a very dusty building like a flour-mill a good shaking, it fills the air with dense clouds, thus creating a liability to explosion on a much more tremendous scale. Just before this flour-mill disaster at Washburn, a most ruinous blow-up occurred at a large candy-mill in New York, attributable, it was thought by some, to the clouds of starch-dust with which the place was often filled. The New York Fire Marshal looked closely into the matter, and came to the conclusion that it was incredible that mere starch-dust could develop such destructive power. There must, he thought, be some other cause; but he found it quite impossible to say what that cause could be. Not very long after, however, another candy-mill blew up in the same way, and this time the cause was pretty clear. One of the workmen stumbled with a tray on his head and threw a quantity of starch-dust over a stove, and the place is said to have gone up like a powder mill.

Formerly such disasters were always attributed to escapes of gas or flashes of lightning, or the mysterious generation of explosive vapours from unknown causes. In coal-mines, of course, all accidents of the kind were ascribed to fiery gases emanating from the coal. For a long time, however, there were suspicions that dust might have something to do with such catastrophes. As long ago as 1815, Sir Humphry Davy appears to have experimented on the subject. Curiously enough, however, he came to the conclusion that dust could not be exploded, and for many years whatever suspicions had been aroused were effectively allayed. Mr Galloway, a chemist of considerable repute, appears to have been the first to establish beyond dispute the fact that Sir Humphry Davy's conclusion was erroneous, and that mere coal-dust can and frequently does explode with great violence. It has been shown,

indeed, that 'when the whole conditions required theoretically for the production of the most disastrous explosions are practically realised, the increase of pressure is equal to eight atmospheres'—that is to say, that if in any confined space, such as a room or a box or a coal-mine, there is just the right mixture of fine dust and fresh air, only a spark is needed to cause an explosion with a force of about 120 lb. to the square inch. In other words, any building in which such a detonation occurs will be subjected to a strain of nearly eight tons on every square foot of internal surface, a pressure which of course must wreck any ordinary building.

Now the philosophy of the thing is really an extremely simple one. It is merely a matter of rapid combustion. Combustion, as most persons must be aware, converts the material burned from the solid into the gaseous form of matter; and as the gases produced occupy a very much larger space than the solid from which they were formed, it must be apparent that when the conversion is instantaneous the expansion occurs with explosive force. Now everybody knows that the smaller are the particles into which every combustible substance is reduced the more rapidly it burns. A log of wood split in two will consume faster than the unsplit log, and if you cut it up into pieces as small as lucifer matches it will flare away much more rapidly still. And the reason is simple. Combustion is merely the chemical combination of the particles of wood with the oxygen of the air. A certain amount of oxygen *must* come into actual contact with any given amount of wood if the wood is to burn. It is the union of the particles of oxygen with the elementary particles of which the wood is composed that constitutes the burning. Two particles of oxygen, for instance, combine with every particle of carbon, and the result is so much carbonic acid gas. One particle of oxygen united with one particle of hydrogen and the result is so much water in the form of steam. And so on with all the other components of the wood. The reason why the whole log of wood does not burn so rapidly as the two halves of it is merely that the two halves present a greater surface of wood for the oxygen to get at; and the more surface the wood is made to present the more rapidly the oxygen will do its work. If you slice up the whole log into shavings, they will burn with fierce rapidity; and if you take the shavings and grind them up into powder and scatter it about, you will still further increase the wood surface and afford the oxygen a still greater opportunity of getting at it.

The 'explosion' of any kind of organic dust should now be easily intelligible. When a particle of the dust is floating in air it has, of course, oxygen all round it, and it requires only the application of a sufficient amount of heat to bring about chemical combination and to burn up the wood—that is, to convert it into gas; and if the particles in a cloud of dust are so close together that one atom cannot be burned without imparting its heat to other atoms around it, those other atoms will burn in just the same way and will instantly fire others. If there is plenty of air and plenty of dust, the process will be so rapid that a flame will flash through a large mill or along a gallery of a coal-mine with a rapidity

so inconceivable that it will be practically instantaneous, and the effect will be an 'explosion.' The gaseous products of the combustion will be generated so swiftly and in such volume that unless there is the freest vent, or the walls of the confined space are strong enough to resist a pressure of seven or eight tons to the square foot, there will necessarily be wreck and ruin; and if the devouring flame, as it sweeps through a building, meets anything easily ignited, there will be a conflagration as well as an explosion. Of course, in a coal-mine, the flash of the dust may meet with the dreadful fire-damp, which may add indefinitely to the disruptive power of the outburst, and no doubt in many cases the two causes have combined—gas may have fired dust, or dust may have fired gas. There is now little doubt, however—indeed there has been no doubt at all since the investigation into the subject by a Royal Commission in 1891—that many of the disasters in coal-mines that have been attributed to fire-damp have, in fact, been the result of the ignition of dry coal-dust floating in the air. In a coal-mine the explosion, though of precisely the same character as that in a flour-mill or a rice-mill, would be more tremendous from the fact that the dust would contain in itself the elements not merely of the ordinary products of combustion, but of highly explosive gas. It is surprising that a matter so simple as this appears to be, now that our scientific men have fathomed the mystery of dust explosions, should so long have remained a mystery. The discovery, however, is a very important one, since it is now clear that by taking the necessary measures for allaying dust, or employing only safety lamps where dust cannot be avoided, many a disaster may be prevented and many a life saved.

THE WHITE GONDOLA.

CHAPTER II.

LORD WILFRED laid his plans with ingenious care and secrecy. He engaged the brothers Sandro and Pietro Robini, the two most powerful gondoliers in Venice.

They had just completed, for racing purposes, a light, two-oared gondola; this he purchased from them, had it painted white, and then disguised with a removable covering of black Japanese silk. With the true colour of his barque thus concealed, the intrepid lover sailed down the Grand Canal on the appointed evening. He knew he could depend on his gondoliers, Pietro and Sandro, for they were true republicans, in full sympathy with abolishing the odious decree.

The wedding-day of Count Palatza was drawing to a close as Annita and her father joined the festive throng on the Molo, the girl feverishly looking down the Canal for the coming of her lover; her father no less anxious, but less confident. The time seemed to Annita an eternity as they paced to and fro, eagerly scanning the crowded Canal for the white gondola.

At length, when the soft crimson glow of the setting sun was fading from the domes of St Mark's, the guests in the Doge's gilded barge were growing languid and fatigued with the day's festivities, and the gay flotilla of accompanying gondolas and barges were all slowly moving

towards the Piazzetta, a courtier abruptly called the Doge's attention to the white gondola, now gliding by. It had suddenly appeared as if out of the sea, for Lord Wilfred had not removed the silken covering until abreast of the Molo, because he had so contrived the cords which held the casing that he could remove it suddenly and at will.

Annita had seen her lover as soon as those on the Doge's barge. She spasmodically clutched her father's arm, and with a throbbing heart, flashing eyes, and bated breath watched all that followed.

'It must be some belated ambassador,' said the Doge to his chamberlain. 'Know you of any such?'

'No, your Excellency. Besides, he has not the colours of any ambassador to your court,' replied the chamberlain.

'True. I had not noticed that. It is strange! Make inquiries without delay.'

Signor Palombo's gondola was passing near, so the chamberlain called to him: 'Know you the owner of yon strange craft? Is he an ambassador?'

'He is,' answered Palombo, with a mocking, Satanic smile—'the ambassador of true republicanism, the champion of ancient Venetian rights!'

'Say you so!' cried the Doge in mounting wrath. 'Then, by the grave of St Mark! he shall be speedily taught repentance for his insolence. Have him brought before me!' he cried to his chamberlain.

This was easier ordered than accomplished; though signalled to come before the Doge, the white gondola paid no heed to the demand, but swiftly continued on its course towards the Lido.

The Doge, seeing this, was beside himself with rage.

'Send two of our best gondoliers after him,' he exclaimed; 'and let them not return without him, on pain of our displeasure!'

Thereupon two robust retainers set out after Lord Wilfred's craft; but they might as well have chased the fleeting shadows of the fading day, for the overfed retainers were no match for such well-trained, muscular gondoliers as Pietro and Sandro.

Their light, fine-lined gondola glided away from their pursuers as easily as a dove outwings a rook; so that the white gondola had vanished from the sight of the Doge's minions long before they reached the Lido, and they had to return baffled, utterly exhausted, and disgraced.

Signor Matranza had observed the discomfiture of the Doge with the utmost satisfaction, and returned home with his daughter, extolling her lover all the way.

Next day all Venice was talking of the exploit of the white gondola, and the Doge offered a handsome reward for the discovery of the culprit.

But Sandro and Pietro were so well disguised with false beards, and so well had the ingenious covering, aided by the dusk, concealed the craft that the emissaries of the Doge were utterly baffled, and could learn nothing of whence it came or where it had vanished to.

But the Doge caused it to be reported that the exploit had been traced to the tipsy retainers of

an Eastern ambassador, his real crafty purpose being to entrap the offender by leading him to believe he was not suspected.

Lord Wilfred had taken refuge on board his ship, and only ventured into the city on the fourth night after the wedding fête.

Signor Matranza gave him a cordial welcome when he appeared, and said: 'The first half of our compact you have bravely kept. Where did you find such fleet gondoliers? They shot away from the Doge's guard like arrows from a bow.'

'Ah, Signor Matranza! I know you will pardon me for keeping the names of these brave fellows to myself until I have accomplished my purpose.'

'As you wish, for it was nobly done! Now, when will you appear again? On Ascension Day?'

'Yes; if my plans are complete.'

'I shall look for you.'

'And you shall not be disappointed.'

So, after a blissful interview with his beloved one, the young noble returned to his ship.

On Ascension Day all Venice was in gala-dress. Hundreds of dark gondolas followed the Doge and his superbly-attired retinue in the magnificent state-barge, the *Bucentaur*, over the azure waters to the castle of St Nicolo, to witness the annual ceremony of the Doge espousing the Adriatic.

Andrea Palombo accompanied the aquatic pageant, eagerly watching for the white gondola (for Signor Matranza had told him); but it did not appear, much to his chagrin, for he had secretly sent word to the Doge's chamberlain that the decree would again be defied. Signor Matranza took no part in the festivities, but watched the departure and return of the flotilla from the Piazzetta, hoping to witness the consummation of the scheme which he had set his heart upon.

Lord Wilfred shrewdly decided that the same plan might not be successful a second time; so he had a smaller gondola painted white, and covered with black silk saturated with oil. This he intended to accompany him, and when approaching the Doge's barge, to set fire to the silk, which would flame up, revealing the white hull; then, while attention was diverted, row boldly past the state-barge, remove the disguise of his own craft, and if pursued, trust to his muscular boatmen to escape to his ship at the Lido; and then in a few days he intended to secretly return for his promised bride.

So, early in the evening, he called upon Annita, besought her to wait patiently, and all would be well. At parting he said: 'Be of good cheer, darling; for I cannot possibly fail with two such hereculean gondoliers as Pietro and Sandro.'

'Ah! but I fear treachery,' she cried.

'Whom do you fear?'

'Signor Palombo. He is often here, constantly seeking to learn of your movements from my father.'

'But we have changed our rendezvous; he can learn nothing of my purpose.'

'He may; he may! For he has always villainous spies at work; they may discover your rendezvous and betray you.'

'No, no, sweet Annita; banish your fears.'

You shall see that I will triumph, in spite of the little dusky peacock, Palombo.'

Then he kissed her tenderly and gaily said: 'I shall soon return for you, my darling,' and went his way.

He had not been gone long when her father returned home somewhat disappointed.

'Well, Annita,' he said, 'I begin to think your lover's courage has failed him; nothing has been seen of the white gondola.'

'Ah, father! you wrong him. He is prepared, and will boldly pass before the Doge's barge to-night, when the revels are at their height.'

'Then, by my faith, he deserves you!'

Thereupon, in a burst of gratitude at his praise, and proud of her lover, she told her father he had just left her, and how he had disguised his gondola.

'He is an ingenious and brave young hero! Annita, you shall watch with me, from the Piazzetta, the Doge's discomfiture.'

'Nay, father, I will remain at home; for it would drive me mad to see him again in such danger and not share it with him.'

'Very well, as you please; but I would not miss the sight for a dukedom.'

At this juncture Palombo came for an interview with Signor Matranza, and the girl retired. But Annita's maid, who was betrothed to the gondolier Pietro, and in sympathy with her mistress's love affair, concealed herself in the heavy curtains and listened to all that passed between them.

'Yes,' she heard Signor Matranza say, 'the youth will fulfil his promise to-night.'

'So you think,' said Palombo, with a scoffing laugh.

'I know he will. This Briton has more courage than we thought. My admiration grows the more I see of him.'

'Then,' said Palombo, with a dark, ominous scowl, 'you really intend to give him your daughter—if he succeeds?'

'I do. Have I not so promised?'

'Buh! What is a promise to such as he?'

'I have given him my word—if he succeeds I will keep it.'

'Then he shall not succeed!' Palombo fairly hissed this threat from between his gleaming teeth.

'You would not thwart him?'

'I have discovered his rendezvous.'

'Ah! And you will betray him?'

'No; not until he has again affronted the Doge; then he shall not escape.'

'I will be no party to this treachery.'

'But, Signor Matranza, if the Doge learns, as he may, that you have given your daughter as a bribe for this insult to him, what of you? Ah!'

'I care nothing and fear nothing for myself.'

'But, failing to secure the Englishman, he would wreak his vengeance on you, Signor Matranza.'

'How can he learn?'

'Your daughter would be gone; the story would be all over Venice, and his emissaries would soon connect you with the conspiracy.'

'Alas! Signor Palombo, there is reason in what you say;' and Signor Matranza paced the room with a puzzled and distressed countenance.

'Now, this is my purpose,' rapidly continued Palombo. 'I will join, and pretend to assist him.

But I will so arrange matters that after he has discovered himself in the white gondola he shall be entrapped, brought before the Doge, and there will be an end of him.'

'This grates on my conscience; I cannot assent to it.'

'Pah! he is only an idle English stripling; why need you trouble your conscience about him? Besides, this was the agreement between us. I demand its fulfilment,' he said imperiously.

'Demand,' cried Signor Matranza, his eyes flashing angrily at the other's tone.

'Yes, demand. It is my due.'

'Then you demand in vain!' retorted the old senator fiercely.

'What! Do you deny me?'

'I do. You first proposed this affront to the Doge; and now that the noble youth may succeed, you would betray him. I will consent to no such treachery.'

'Even though you lose my friendship?'

'Even so! No threat will change me!'

'Then, Signor Matranza, you had best beware of me as a foe. For, by St Mark! both of you shall feel my vengeance!' With this they parted; and the maid at once acquainted her mistress with all she had heard.

Annita sought her father.

'My child,' he said, 'I have quarrelled with Signor Palombo, for he means to betray Lord Wilfred.'

'Oh father!' she gasped, throwing her arms about his neck in distress.

'Have no fear, my child. Your lover must be told of his danger. Know you of his rendezvous?'

'I do, I do! I will let him know,' she cried impatiently. 'I will send my maid at once.'

'And tell him this,' continued her father. 'If he succeeds I will join his ship at the Lido late to-night, and you shall follow in the morning. We had better not go together, for Palombo will have spies at work. Then, my dear, in some Adriatic port you shall be joined in wedlock.'

'Oh father, father! how can I thank you?' cried the girl, as she kissed him rapturously, while tears of gratitude filled her beautiful eyes.

'We must leave Venice for a time, my dear, for Palombo will hesitate at no villainy to injure me now.'

Signor Matranza rapidly made all preparations for leaving. Then, telling his daughter to follow him in the morning if he did not return that night, he went forth in his gondola to watch events.

When her father had departed, Annita hastily summoned her private gondola and proceeded to the rendezvous (in a side canal) where Lord Wilfred's craft lay concealed, for she wished to be sure he was made aware of his danger. When she found her lover she breathlessly told him of Palombo's intended treachery, and pleaded with him not to attempt the perilous feat for her sake.

'Ah, give me up! give me up! I fear my father will be sacrificed by this unscrupulous Palombo. He is now his enemy because he would not join in betraying you.'

Young Wilfred stood perplexed, deep in thought, and irresolute for some seconds, and then observed:

'Palombo comes pretending to aid me, you say?'

'Yes. But do not trust him! Ah, do not trust him, Wilfred!'

'But I will—as I would an adder!' he said fiercely.

Then he led her into the cabin of the white gondola, and tenderly said:

'Your father, Annita, intends to keep faith with me, I have now no doubt.'

'Ha! he does, Wilfred; he does. I am sure, I am sure!'

'Then, my darling, I know I shall succeed. Will you face this exploit with me?'

'Ah! nothing would content me more than to share your danger.'

'And if I fail?—'

'I will still share whatever is to come, for I know no world without you!'

'Then may the angels guide our gondola into placid waters—in heaven or earth—I care not which, so I share it with you!'

This tenderness was interrupted by Sandro warning the lover that a strange gondola had twice passed down the Canal. 'We should be moving, signor.'

'They are the spies of Palombo,' said Lord Wilfred. 'He is coming pretending to aid us, but he really means treachery, and shall be paid in kind, as befits such a dastard. Now you and I, Sandro, will lead in the small craft, and the signorina and Pietro follow in the other. If this Palombo accosts us—as doubtless he will—you shall pretend to accept his advice and bid him lead the way. When he has gone we will change to the other craft again, remove the covering from the small one, and send it after him; and we will escape in the opposite direction, while he leads the Doge's emissaries on a false chase—which will go hard with him if captured.'

'Tis well planned, signor.'

'You can trust this new gondolier?'

'With my life, signor. He is heart and soul with us.'

Lord Wilfred then rapidly explained his purpose to Annita, the transfer was made, and the two crafts, keeping close together, put forth. The white gondolas were so well disguised with their black silk coverings, aided by the darkness, that one looked exactly like the other, except for size.

The day had been glaring, hot, and oppressive; but now a gentle breeze blew from the east, and dark clouds hung over the Lido, obscuring the stars and foreboding an approaching storm.

As they entered the Grand Canal the revelry was at its height; hundreds of gondolas, decked with flowers and laden with merry companies of maskers, darted here and there. Under the influence of wine and protected by masks, the cord of etiquette was broken; decorum thrown to the winds; reckless flirtation and jovial banter reigned supreme. Now and again, during the lull in the general uproar, the sweet voice of a pathetic singer floated melodiously over the water, and then it was abruptly drowned by the merry twing-a-ling of a mandoline in a passing craft; and this in turn gave place to a bright-eyed coquette, who, with a rippling laugh, tossed a cluster of roses to the young Englishman, blew

him a kiss with her shapely fingers, and lifting her velvet mask for an instant, gave him a view of her handsome face and flashing eyes. But Lord Wilfred was too intent on discovering Palombo to heed all this. He had not long to wait; a small gondola passed, and suddenly turned about and then followed. As it a second time came alongside the small gondola, Lord Wilfred recognised the short, plump figure of his rival.

Palombo leaned over the side and whispered: 'You are the Englishman. I wish you to succeed. I would advise you.'

'Who are you?' asked Sandro.

'A friend sent by Signor Matranza to aid you.'

'Ah! then we may trust you. What have you to advise?'

'First, where is the white gondola?'

'There, following close at hand,' replied Lord Wilfred, pointing to the craft in which Annita was concealed.

'But that gondola is black.'

'It is covered with silk, which we can strip off in an instant.'

'Ah, good!' cried Palombo. 'Bravo! it is well contrived. Why are you not with it?'

'I was about to board it when you came up.'

'Will you follow my advice?' asked Palombo.

'If you can assure me that you are indeed my friend.'

'What assurance do you need?'

'Join my gondolier in this craft, and lead the way with him.'

Palombo hesitated a moment, and in an undertone began talking with his own gondolier.

'Now, what have you to tell me?' urged Lord Wilfred. 'Speak quickly, for we are approaching the Piazzetta.'

'I will join your man, to convince you of my sincerity,' replied Palombo.

Sandro assisted him to board the disguised craft; then his own sped away in the direction of the Doge's barge, which could now be distinguished by its blazing lights midstream, opposite the Doge's palace.

'I would advise,' said Palombo, 'that you should steer between the Doge's barge and the Piazzetta; for, as you can see, it is at present less crowded, and your escape would be easier.'

'I see it is less crowded,' replied Wilfred, but deciding in his own mind to take the opposite course.

'Besides, the Doge has by some secret means learned of your coming, and expects you from the other direction.'

'Ah! is it so?' said Wilfred. 'Then lead the way in this craft, and we will follow in the other.'

'Good!' cried Palombo. 'It could not be better.'

'And at a signal from you I will expose the white gondola.'

'Bravo! bravo!' exclaimed Palombo, delighted with the apparent success of his treachery.

Wilfred signalled for Pietro to come alongside; then he and Sandro quickly boarded Annita's gondola. She was concealed in the cabin, so that Palombo did not see her.

They were now within a hundred yards of the Doge's barge; Palombo urged the gondolier to increase his speed, which he did, and the vessel

sped onward, the other close alongside. Palombo gave the signal.

Lord Wilfred snatched the torch from the prow of the barca and touched the silk-encased craft in which Palombo sat; for an instant the oily fabric flashed all over like a train of powder, then as quickly died out, revealing the white hull and cabin of the gondola, and the terror-stricken Palombo seated near the prow; while Pietro and Sandro with a few powerful strokes turned Annita's craft abruptly aside.

A shout from the Doge's barge told that Palombo in the white gondola was discovered, for he had sent his boatman to say it was coming.

'Seize the villain!' cried the Doge's chamberlain.

The emissaries of the Doge were soon upon him, and he was quickly secured. He struggled, protested, and exclaimed frantically: 'I am not the offender—I was lured into this gondola by a trick—the real traitor is in that gondola!' Palombo continued, pointing to Lord Wilfred's vanishing craft, which was now seen to be white also, for the lover had boldly removed the covering.

'Secure the accomplice!' cried the Doge. 'A hundred golden pieces if you capture him!' as he noticed the second white craft.

A dozen gondolas sped after the Englishman. But while the Doge's minions were securing Palombo, Pietro and Sandro had gained thirty paces.

Lord Wilfred threw the torch into the sea, then seated himself again beside Annita and looked back.

'Look!' she cried, pointing astern; 'there is one gondola with two powerful men leading the rest, and gaining upon us.'

'Who are they, Sandro?' asked Lord Wilfred.

'Fratini, the "Mock Doge" of the day, and his mate—two clever gondoliers; but we do not fear them, signor.'

'But they are slowly overtaking us.'

'They have been in the revels all day, and are filled with stale wine; their strength will not last,' answered Pietro, with contempt.

'Still, they have less weight to carry.'

'True, signor; but we shall outlast them,' interposed Sandro.

Nevertheless the foremost gondola continued to gain slowly upon them. The rest of the pursuers had one by one given up the chase.

A gust of wind now suddenly swept over the lagoons, thunder pealed and boomed, and dense black clouds hid the pursuers from their view, except when now and again vivid flashes of lightning revealed them for an instant.

For two miles the chase continued; gradually the lightning passed away to the west, but they could hear by their pursuers' voices that they were gradually dropping astern.

'Make for the Lido,' cried Lord Wilfred to his men.

In and out among the numerous flotilla the two herculean gondoliers propelled the craft with marvellous power and precision, frequently avoiding a collision by the mere width of a blade. After them, straining every muscle, chased the emissaries of the Doge, sometimes gaining, and sometimes losing by collisions, all the while

shouting: 'Stop the traitor! Stop the traitor!' But the occupants of other gondolas, thinking it a race among the revellers, paid no heed to them.

Annita sat trembling, with her hand in Lord Wilfred's, anxiously looking back at their pursuers, and constantly murmuring: 'Oh, that you should endanger your life for me! I am not worth such a brave sacrifice!'

'There will be no sacrifice, my darling, for they can never overtake us,' he replied. 'What say you, Sandro?'

'Never!' answered the stalwart fellow, his face aglow with pride in his strength and skill.

They were now getting clear of pleasure-craft. There had been now and then a faint flash of lightning, a distant rumble of thunder, and presently there came a few drops of rain.

'The storm is coming,' cried Pietro. 'Throw away the torch; then, in the gathering gloom, they cannot see to follow us.'

Then finally there came a pause; the splash of the oars following was silent, and a fierce imprecation was flung after the refugees.

'Ha!' cried Sandro, 'Fratini has given up the struggle. Signor, the race is over. I told you they could not last.'

'Bravo, good lads!' exclaimed Lord Wilfred. 'You have accomplished a good night's work.'

It was as Sandro predicted. In their half-drunken frenzy, Fratini and his mate had soon exhausted their strength.

The lovers embraced each other in mute thankfulness for their escape. They heard no more of their pursuers, and in less than an hour Lord Wilfred, with the fair Annita, stood on the deck of his ship, waiting the coming of her father.

Signor Matranza joined them before midnight, and after recovering from his surprise at finding his daughter there, warmly congratulated Lord Wilfred on the success of his daring exploit. Then he counselled putting to sea at once, which the young lover eagerly agreed to.

A few days later the vessel sailed into Messina, where the lovers were married, and where they lingered, amid the wealth of native orange-blossoms, to enjoy their honeymoon; while Palombo languished in prison awaiting the Doge's pleasure.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

It is an essential feature of our present form of government that everything done by the party in office should be sharply criticised by the opposition, and such a system is a wholesome check upon jobbery and wrong-doing generally. Very often, however, the party in office is blamed where nothing but praise should be theirs; and it is often very difficult for outsiders to judge which side is in the right. As an example let us take the case of the magazine-rifle and the new ammunition 'cordite,' about which so many cross opinions existed that the inquiring taxpayer could not possibly tell whether he was being benefited or victimised. Happily, in this case conclusive evidence has been furnished that the British soldier is armed with the best rifle and the best ammunition procurable. At the recent meeting of the National Rifle Association at Bisley the

marksmanship was of the most phenomenal kind, one competitor after another securing the 'highest possible,' until the markers began to think that 'bull's-eyes' only was the order of the day. It is of course idle to think that this wonderful accuracy of rifle-fire is due to any sudden physical improvement in the men who compete; we must rather put it to the credit of the new arm and the much-abused cordite. The 1897 Bisley meeting has established a record in marksmanship which it will be very difficult to beat, and which will have a moral effect throughout the world of untold value to this country.

We have heard so much of the destruction of small birds for the decoration of ladies' hats that we are apt to forget that millions are killed every season for culinary purposes. A complaint has recently come from Italy that so many quails are despatched every season to Britain that places where they were once abundant have been absolutely denuded of them, and the worst part of the matter is that the poor birds are netted in the spring and autumn, and kept in confinement until the London season, which coincides with the natural nesting-time. At one time France prohibited the transit of these birds through the country during the close-season; but as this only meant that the route was altered by way of Germany and Belgium, the prohibition was relaxed. Larks, robins, and hosts of other small birds also find their way to the dinner-tables of the rich, the guests little dreaming that they are assisting to render the fields and hedgerows songless. An international law which not only protected birds during the close-season, but forbade their transit or sale would soon put a stop to this cruel traffic. But much can be done if a few leaders of fashion would take up the cause of the poor birds, by refusing to recognise them as a legitimate article of diet.

So much has been lately heard about the rush for gold in the Canadian North-west that Mr Seddon's remarks about the gold discoveries in another of our colonies—New Zealand—of which he is prime-minister, will be read with interest. Gold was discovered there in 1857, and up to the present time the colony has exported the precious metal to the value of fifty-one millions sterling. The deepest shafts have not been sunk more than six hundred feet, and mining experts regard this as a mere scratching of the surface. The yield for last year does not come up to the average; but this is due to the introduction of improved machinery to replace the more primitive methods of mining, gold winning being for the moment suspended while the change is in progress. Investors in New Zealand mines are safeguarded from the action of strikes, the conciliation courts being so constituted that all disputes between mine-owners and miners are quickly settled. The present population of the colony—which is somewhat larger than England—is about 750,000; and last year the imports were about eight millions, and the exports nine millions—a wonderful trade considering that New Zealand has been so recently populated. They have twenty million sheep, and frozen meat last year was exported to the extent of £1,200,000.

In the coronation number of the *Times*—recently reproduced in fac-simile—appear two

advertisements of literary interest, one of which we will quote in full: 'Education.—At Mr Simpson's Academy, Easby, near Richmond, Yorkshire, youths are boarded and instructed by Mr S. and proper assistants in whatever their future prospects may require, at twenty and twenty-three guineas a year, according to age, including clothes, boots, and other necessities. No extras and no vacations. Cards, with references, to be had from Mr S., who attends from twelve to two o'clock daily at the Saracen's Head, Snow Hill.' If the reader will take the trouble to refer to Dickens's *Nicholas Nickleby* he will find this advertisement—elaborated as that of Mr Squeers of Dotheboys' Hall—even down to the place of appointment—the Saracen's Head, Snow Hill. *Nicholas Nickleby* was published in the year following the Queen's coronation—namely, 1839.

Among the noble array of vessels which took part in the recent magnificent review at Spithead there was none more interesting than the new torpedo-boat, the *Turbinia*, for she is not only the fastest vessel afloat, but possesses engines of an entirely new kind. These consist of three steam turbines of the type invented by the Hon. Charles Parsons; and their total weight is little more than three and a-half tons as compared with the fifteen to twenty tons which engines of the ordinary kind fitted to torpedo-boats weigh. A turbine may be compared to a windmill fitted within a closed cylinder, the steam blowing the blades round, and the shaft, thus turned at the rate of more than 2000 revolutions per minute, acting direct upon the propeller. At the recent review the Admiral expressed the wish that the *Turbinia* should, for the benefit of the royal guests present, show off her best speed. This was done, and the torpedo-boat was urged forward at the unprecedented rate of thirty-four knots, which is equivalent to no less than forty-two and a-half miles per hour—or very little less than the average rate of our fast trains. Fast travelling on shipboard generally means terrible vibration, but voyagers on this latest form of torpedo-boat state that the most noticeable feature of the run was the entire absence of tremor.

A great many attempts have been made to expedite the operation of voting at parliamentary and municipal elections; but none seems as yet to have met with the approval of the authorities. It may be that, as in most other cases where improvements are suggested, vested interests have to be reckoned with. However this may be, it seems certain that the adoption of vote-recording machinery would so simplify matters that a number of clerks and others would be dispensed with, and much expense saved. The most recent of these machines is the invention of Messrs Wild & Collins, of Norwich, and it was exhibited lately at the municipal offices of that city. The ballot papers take the form of stout cards, circular in shape, and attached to counterfoils in bound books. The intending voter is handed one of these cards, and is directed to enter a screened-off compartment, where he finds a number of boxes in a row, each with a slot at the top. Each box bears the name of a candidate, and possibly his party colours. The voter makes no mark on his card, but drops it into the box of the candidate whom he fancies. By an ingenious arrangement

the card is printed with the candidate's name directly it enters the box, and the voter is able to see that this has been done through a glazed opening, common to all the boxes, behind which the card passes in its way to the locked ballot-box below. At the same time, an official in charge can see the blank side of the card, and can thus ascertain that the vote has been recorded without knowing in whose favour it has been cast. The ingenious contrivance is known as the Wild-Collin's Voting Apparatus, and it is the subject of a patent.

The history of the Panama Canal scheme is that of one of the most unfortunate enterprises ever conceived, and one upon which about sixty millions sterling have been spent without tangible return. A few years ago the newspapers were full of what was being done at Panama; now we hear little of the subject, and most persons look upon it as dead. But it is not so. In 1894 a company was formed at Paris to continue and complete a ten-lock canal, in place of the more ambitious sea-level scheme of M. de Lesseps, and the work has made good progress, considering the small capital (two and a-half millions sterling) with which the company is equipped. But the work is purely experimental, and its object is to show that a lock-canal is feasible. Further particulars of the project are given in the last reports of the British Consular officers at Panama and Santa Marta.

The British Consul at Bordeaux has recently sent over to this country a number of specimens of sun-bonnets for horses. At first sight there seems to be something ludicrous in such a statement, for sun-bonnets suggest parasols, and parasols dainty gloves, and these latter would be obviously out of place in connection with a horse. But sun-bonnets for horses represent a sober and very necessary fact, for, whereas previous to their adoption by the Bordeaux tramway company an average of twelve horses annually were killed by sunstroke, since the animals were bonneted none have suffered from that complaint. The bonnets are made of rush, just like a wide-brimmed and high-crowned hat, bound with red braid, and strings to tie under the animal's chin, with holes at the top through which the ears protrude. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has taken up the matter, and it is said that large orders for this equine head-gear have been placed with certain manufacturers in this country.

In mining, in deep-sea blasting, and all operations in which explosives are used for engineering works, the fuse employed is a very important part of the business, for upon it rests the question of success or failure. The different patterns of fuses made for these purposes are many in number, and are generally supplied in coils twenty-four feet in length. They mostly have the appearance of an innocent white cord not much thicker than a blind cord, but within they are charged with a composition which burns down at a known rate, so that the miner can regulate the time which elapses between the lighting of the fuse and the explosion of the charge with the greatest accuracy. Messrs Tangye, of Redruth, Cornwall, are now making a special form of fuse in which the composition is enclosed in an impermeable, solid, drawn metallic tube, with an outer covering

of the usual kind. Such a fuse as this can be kept under water for many weeks without any injury to its burning capability, so that it may be used for deep-sea work or for wet places in mines and quarries. The Royal Engineers and other experts have recently submitted this tube-fuse to very crucial tests.

It has unfortunately required the sacrifice of a human life to demonstrate that hair-wash giving off an inflammable vapour can be ignited by an electric spark. Professor Meldola, in commenting upon this deplorable occurrence, endorses Lord Kelvin's theory that a spark generated in combing the hair was the initial cause of the combustion, and says that some years ago he was consulted by a firm of so-called 'dry-cleaners' of wearing apparel, who were troubled by mysterious outbreaks of fire on their premises. In this dry-cleaning process the goods were immersed in a vessel of benzine—which gives off an inflammable vapour at ordinary temperatures, and is kept in motion by mechanical stirrers. Accidental firing of the vapour became so common that it was thought that the industry must be given up altogether, until it was suggested that the excitation of frictional electricity might be at the bottom of the mischief. Precautions were immediately taken to eliminate this element of danger, and the mysterious outbreaks of fire at once ceased.

Among the many attempts which have been made to establish tapestry works in this country was the endeavour of one William Sheldon in the sixteenth century to found, by the help of workmen brought from Flanders, such a factory at Weston, in Warwickshire. Among the works executed there were certain maps of English counties, each measuring twenty-four by eighteen feet, five of which passed into the possession of Horace Walpole in 1780. Two of these huge maps are now at the Bodleian Library, and the three remaining belong to the York Museum. All were in a sadly fragmentary condition, as might be expected after the wear and tear of more than three centuries; but one of them, a map of Warwickshire, has recently been cleverly restored by the Decorative Needlework Society, and was exhibited in London. This big representation of Shakespeare's county is probably the most perfect contemporary map extant, and we should think the most accurate. Towns, villages, manor-houses, and even windmills are plainly indicated, and the localities more particularly associated with Shakespeare exactly marked.

It is a curious thing that so soon as any remedial measure is brought forward to cope with disease, agitators should rise up to denounce it. There was this strange opposition raised to the use of chloroform, the greatest boon to suffering humanity which has ever been discovered. Coming nearer to present times, we find Pasteur's noble efforts to deal with rabies hampered in the same way; and later still the antitoxin treatment of diphtheria has been assailed in no measured terms. In a lecture lately delivered at King's College by Dr Sims Woodhead, this last remedy was fully discussed, and statistics quoted in order to show that the treatment, if adopted in the early stages of the disease, was most effectual; but that if the case were neglected until after the third or fourth day, when the tissues in various organs of the body had suffered degeneration, the physician could

not expect to bring the patient back to health at once. The life of the patient depends upon the tissues being able to carry on their work, and they could do this when antitoxin was present to prevent those organic changes which were so much dreaded. In view of the statistics which were quoted by the lecturer, he expressed his strong conviction that those who opposed the use of antitoxin in diphtheria assumed a tremendous responsibility.

It will be remembered that by a recent Order in Council carbide of calcium, from which acetylene gas is generated by the mere addition of water, was placed under the same restrictions as petroleum. This order has now been so far modified that quantities of carbide not exceeding five pounds may be kept without a license, provided that each pound be stored in hermetically-closed metal vessels. This exemption will be valued by many who are anxious to carry on experiments with this comparatively new product of the laboratory.

The ever-fascinating problem of the conquest of the air seems somewhat nearer solution by the experiments with a soaring-machine which have recently been conducted by Mr Percy S. Pilcher. The machine consists of two large flat planes, or wings, made of bamboo, and covered with a light textile material, the entire apparatus weighing fifty pounds. Between these aeroplanes the operator is suspended, his arms fitting into stiff sleeves, one on each wing, so that his whole weight is upon his elbows. By help of a cord attached to the machine, so as to turn it into a species of kite, Mr Pilcher has been able to rise to a height of seventy feet and to travel two hundred and fifty yards through the air before descending gradually to the earth. It is intended to continue these interesting experiments and to attach to the machine a light four-horse-power engine to drive a propeller.

The Northern Electrical and Ventilating Company of Liverpool have introduced a new system of electric lighting which is quite independent of a dynamo machine, with its necessary adjunct in the form of a gas or steam engine. The current is produced by a new form of primary battery, which is clean in action, quite free from fumes or smell of any kind, and is remarkably constant and economical. This system is the invention of Mr H. S. Pyne, science master at King William's College, Isle of Man, where it has been in use for some time, both for general illumination and for lantern-projection work, with signal success.

It is now the rule to disinfect a room in which a case of infectious disease has been treated by sulphur fumes, while at the same time the paper is stripped from the walls. Professor König of Göttingen advocates the use of mercurial vapour for the same purpose, and says that this mode of treatment is equally efficacious in ridding an apartment of noxious insects. The method of operation is simple, and consists in putting about two ounces of corrosive sublimate (mercuric bichloride) into a plate over a chafing dish, after sealing up with paper the doors and windows of the room. After the expiration of three or four hours the windows are opened and the room thoroughly aired, the person entrusted with this duty holding a sponge over mouth and nose,

and taking care not to inhale the vapour of the mercury.

A very interesting account is published in *Harper's Magazine* of the terrible havoc being wrought in Massachusetts by the gipsy caterpillar. The first specimens of this very unwelcome stranger are said to have been introduced twenty-six years ago by a French savant, who had the notion of crossing the creature with the silkworm so as to originate a robust silk-producing hybrid for the new world. The scheme came to nothing; but the caterpillars escaped and multiplied with such astonishing celerity that they literally devastated one district after another, until they spread over two hundred and twenty square miles of territory. The caterpillars are so tenacious of life that no ordinary insecticides are of the least avail, and it has been shown that even the arsenic spray has little or no effect upon them. Extremes of heat and cold hurt it not; and, although of so greedy a nature, days of starvation seem to have little effect in reducing its strength. Like the imported rabbits of Australia, the gipsy caterpillars of Massachusetts defy their hosts, and probably the only remedy for their subjugation will be found in the introduction of some natural enemy which preys upon them.

THE TRACKERS OF THE PUNJAB.

In those parts of the Punjab adjoining the Indus and the other principal rivers, where much cattle-grazing is carried on, there is a great deal of cattle-lifting. The 'cattle-lifter' of the Punjab is a very cunning personage, and no one is better versed than he in the art of making one's self scarce. If not followed immediately, he soon succeeds in making off to some out-of-the-way part of the country. There is, however, a class of men who are the terror of the 'cattle-lifter,' and, in fact, of all criminals. These men, called *khoji*, 'searcher,' or 'tracker,' are from their youth upwards trained to track criminals by their footprints. A first-class tracker can not only trace criminals by their footprints, but in the event of shoes being worn, can sometimes tell from what part of the country the wearer comes; thus, should the impression be that of a sandal, he knows that the wearer is a hill-man.

Many are the dodges resorted to by the cattle-lifters and others to escape the lynx-eyed *khoji*. First he will, perhaps, tie rags round his feet, or he will put his shoes on backwards; then, after having gone some distance, he will mount a buffalo. The cattle-lifters who frequent the banks of the Indus and other rivers have a clever way of eluding their pursuers. Having caught a buffalo, the thief drives it into the river, clings to its tail, and guides it wherever he wants it to go. By this means he is quickly carried down by the current, and so escapes without leaving any tell-tale footprints behind him. But it is very difficult to outwit a really good tracker. Distance is nothing to him. A *khoji* has tracked a burglar yard by yard for eighty miles, until he reached the lockup of a certain village, and there found the man he wanted. The police of that place had observed a suspicious-looking character walking about with a small bundle, and had put him in the lockup.

On examination, the bundle was found to contain several hundred rupees' worth of jewellery.

A remarkable instance of perseverance in tracking occurred once when a certain criminal had been followed to a ferry on the banks of the Chenab. Here the tracker was nonplussed for a while, as the Deputy Commissioner had a short time before crossed with a large following of natives. Among so many footprints the *khaji* was unable to take up the trail. But he was determined not to give up the search; so, to impress the characteristics of the track on his mind, he retraced his journey the way he had come for two or three miles. He then returned, and eventually found the track and caught the man, after having gone over a hundred miles. Some of these trackers are also famed for their remarkable local knowledge. One man in particular, as soon as he saw the footprints, would sometimes tell you at once the name and abode of the party wanted. On one occasion this tracker was engaged to find a man who had committed a burglary of some jewellery. As soon as he saw the track he remarked: 'It's So-and-so. Go straight to his house in yonder village, and you will find him there.' They did so, and there they found the man they were looking for, engaged in breaking up the stolen property.

A curious case of tracking took place in a frontier district, which shows the native police in no very creditable light. Two sheep belonging to a government official were found to be missing. The footprints were found to be those of a man employed to look after the public gardens, and he was accordingly arrested. But on following up the track, it was found to lead to a place just opposite the police barracks, where the skins of the sheep were discovered, as well as traces of a fire. This threw suspicion on the police, as it seemed very unlikely that the thief would have killed the sheep under their very eyes. It was afterwards proved that the sheep were taken by the police, and that they had stolen the gardener's shoes to avoid detection.

In tracing stolen cattle the trackers will tell you whether the beast is being ridden, whether it is laden, or if it is simply being driven. Should the hind-footmarks of the animal be more distinct than those of the fore-feet, it is being ridden; and this they know from the fact that natives do not sit in the middle, as Europeans do, but at the back, on the haunches of the animal; consequently deeper impressions will be given by the hind-feet. Should the animals be laden, they know that it is so because the footsteps are in that case shorter than they would be if the animals were simply being driven with no load on their backs.

FORESTALLED!

By GEORGE G. FARQUHAR, Author of *His Advocate*, &c.

'BOTHER the fellow!' I muttered savagely. 'Just when I'd screwed up my nerves almost to the point of putting the question, and so settling my fate one way or the other, here he must come and upset everything with his confounded "Our dance, Miss Bellinger, I believe!" Deuce take the man, and his dance too!'

My gaze followed the pair as they passed be-

tween the double row of palms towards the ball-room. For a moment the music swelled higher, and mingling with it in my ears came the silvery ripple of Joan's laughter. Confusion seize the clown!—he seemed to have the knack of amusing her, if nothing else. Then the door of the conservatory swung to behind them.

I rose from the settee, frowned witheringly at a big hydrangea bloom, and thought things not to be found in the category of polite proverbs. From this genial mood I was roused by the frou-frou of a woman's dress and a tripping footfall which caused me to glance round quickly, half-expectantly. But it was merely my sister Bertha.

'What's amiss, Tom?' asked she merrily.

'You don't look extravagantly amiable to-night.'

'Don't I, indeed? Well, I feel even less cheerful than I look.'

'You couldn't, Tom dear,' Bertha protested flippantly. 'Come now, what is it? Anxiety about Aunt Jane's health?'

'Oh, hang Aunt Jane!'

'Tom—Tom!' and Bertha's hands went up in simulated horror. 'Your own blood relation, too! How utterly depraved of you!'

As a matter of confession, I never *could* bring myself to a due state of honest sympathy where Aunt Jane's neurotic ailments were concerned. True, they were the only relaxations the poor old soul allowed herself, but then she ever and inexorably worked them for all they were worth. Among other instances, whenever she felt one of her 'attacks' coming on, nothing would do but that she must have her favourite niece to wait upon her, hand and foot, from morning till night. It was precious hard lines on Bertha, maybe; yet it is the penalty a girl has to pay for being a gentler nurse than sister.

'Not Aunt Jane!' Bertha went on, after a pause. 'Then it must be Joan. That was she I saw just now with Captain Moston, wasn't it? Have you and she been falling out, or what?'

'Quite the contrary. We were getting on famously together until that conceited jackanapes thrust himself forward and carried her off.'

'Why, what can you complain of in that? I suppose he simply claimed the waltz she had promised him. What are parties and dances for?'

'The only rational use of them is to keep people out of the way of those who don't want to dance. Otherwise, they're nothing but stupid circuses, in my opinion.'

'Tom, you're a grumpy bear—a downright morose, irritable, surly, rude person!—and I'm sorry uncle ever invited you down here at all. You've scarcely been twenty-four hours in the house yet, and already you show a temper—that—that—There; Joan must be an angel to have tolerated you for five minutes!'

I did not feel called upon to find fault with the classification. My quarrel was not with Miss Bellinger—nor yet with Bertha.

'Well,' said I quickly, 'this swashbuckler fellow—this army bounder—who is he, anyway?'

'Captain Moston is nothing more than a gentleman,' retorted Bertha with what she considered an air of delicate irony. 'He isn't one of your sort at all, Tom.'

'Whoever he may be, he needs a lesson in manners,' I rejoined hotly. 'The way in which he has been hanging round Miss Bellinger ever since I've been here is absolutely insufferable. Of course you haven't noticed it; you've been upstairs with Aunt Jane all the time. But I have; and by Jove! there'll be ructions soon if'—

'Oh, now I begin to understand,' interposed my sister amusedly. 'That's how the wind blows, is it? You're jealous, Tom. Gracious me, it's clear you *don't* know Captain Moston since you wonder at that. Just wait until you see him flirting with *me*. You forget you haven't had an opportunity of witnessing that yet.'

'I don't care twopence whom he flirts with, so long as it isn't Miss Bellinger,' replied I. 'Besides, it isn't fair to her. No man has a right to monopolise any girl as he does, unless he seriously thinks about—means to—to'—

'And how do you know Captain Moston doesn't?' Bertha put in hurriedly.

'Oh, I've come across the type before—the irresistible, self-complacent, professed gallant, who never'—

Flushing scarlet, Bertha stamped her foot angrily.

'I won't listen to you! It's disgraceful! He is—he is—— At all events, I know Joan likes him—is very fond of him in fact. She told me so herself. And if she had to choose between you and him I'm perfectly certain which she would favour.' Here Bertha broke out into another high-pitched giggle. 'Really, Tom, I'm almost sorry for you. If you wish to oust Captain Moston I can assure you you'll have to get up very early in the morning.'

This outburst was indeed a facer for me; but I did not intend that my torment of a sister should note its effects.

'I wish you wouldn't be so slangy, Bertha,' I said reprovingly. 'It shows shocking bad form in girls.'

'Thanks for the benefit of the example,' retorted she airily. 'Only I didn't mean it for slang either. It's a piece of advice to be taken literally. I'll explain—though you don't deserve any such consideration from me really. Now listen to this. Every morning, before breakfast, Joan wanders off by herself through the park towards the shrubbery; and soon afterwards, by an odd coincidence, Captain Moston also strolls away, but invariably in the opposite direction. Now doesn't that strike you as being somewhat significant? While you are lazying in bed—unless you have amended your habits of late—no doubt he is improving the golden opportunities. You recollect uncle's adage, that women are apt to gauge a man's affection by his persistence, especially where—— But the waltz is over, and here comes the crowd. My poor Tom, truly I pity you!'

And with a mock-solemn shake of her head, she was gone.

I mooned up into the billiard-room, where subsequently I was badly beaten by my fifteen-

year-old cousin, Harold, in a 'hundred up' game. His flukes were phenomenal.

'Say, Tom, you're a bit off colour to-night, aren't you?' he exclaimed patronisingly. 'Never saw you make such a rotten show in my life. But what d'you think of *my* play, eh? I've come on a lot lately, haven't I! Fact is Captain Moston's been tipping me a few wrinkles the last day or two. Jolly clever chap, the captain, you know.'

I offered no comment—audibly.

'You'd better pull yourself together before you tackle him at this game,' Harold continued. 'On your present display you wouldn't stand an earthly against him; he could give you fifty and lick you hollow even then.'

Whereupon the youngster entered into a glowing eulogy of the captain's many splendid accomplishments and good qualities, a rattle to which I had neither the desire nor the patience to hearken. Incidentally, however, he happened to mention that the bedroom of the gentleman in question opened out of the same gallery as mine—was, indeed, next but one to it. Later, when I passed this particular room on my way up to bed, I chanced to observe that the key projected from the lock on the outside of the door. Ere I fell asleep I had settled upon a *ruse de guerre*.

Waking soon after daybreak, I dressed hastily and slipped out into the corridor. Listening at the captain's door, I could hear his heavy, regular breathing within; he was still fast asleep. My fingers sought the protruding key, and softly, warily, I turned it, the bolt sliding into its socket without a sound. Now, I well knew that all the apartments in my uncle's house were fitted with patent fastenings, each having its special key, no one key opening any other lock than its own; and I flattered myself upon the tactical use to which I had been enabled to put my knowledge. Of a certainty there would be no Captain Moston at the rendezvous that morning. Chuckling over the success of my stratagem, I thrust the key into my pocket and hurried downstairs.

Half-an-hour afterwards, from the embrasure of the library window, I stood and watched Joan issue from the stone porch, cross the terrace, and wend down by the shrubberies—exactly as I had been led to expect. Myself unseen, I followed after, until she entered the ornate wooden chalet near the tennis-court. In a few minutes she reappeared with a bicycle, which she trundled down to the level gravelly path beyond. Here she waited, tapping the ground vexedly with the toe of her boot, glancing this way and that at intervals, with growing impatience. I thrust through the bushes behind her.

'How late you are!' she cried, turning round at the noise; then, seeing me, she stammered confusedly, 'Oh, Mr Varcoe, I—I expected—I thought it was some one else!'

'That's a little disappointing for both of us,' I answered, biting my lip. 'It was some other person you hoped to see—eh?'

'I said—expected.'

'Don't you think it amounts to about the same thing,' I hazarded suavely, 'under the circumstances?'

'Not at all—why need it? Still, I must confess I wish you had not come just now. I didn't want to see you, nor you to see me.'

I swung round as if to leave her.

'A girl never looks her best when learning to cycle,' she went on. 'One always feels so helpless, so awkward, so very ridiculous an object at first. That's why I practise out here before the other folk are astir. And now you've found it out, and have come to laugh at me.'

'I declare not,' said I, returning to her side. 'I hadn't even the faintest idea that you were qualifying for a feminine Ixion'—

'There! Isn't that poking fun at me? Really, it's too bad! Why, Bertha told me that you yourself were an enthusiastic cyclist—almost as expert a rider as Captain Moston. You ought not to chaff or discourage a beginner—for I *do* so want to learn.'

Again she peered round in search of him who, to my certain knowledge, would never put in an appearance that morning.

'How annoying!' she ejaculated, pursing up her lips. 'What can be keeping him? I wouldn't have given him those three dances last night if I had thought he would have failed me now. That was the condition.'

'A pleasurable one, surely,' I murmured, trying vainly to recollect more than one of the three dances mentioned. 'To be of service to you in any way, to be with you, alone, and in'—

'Oh, must it not be delightful?' cried Joan, in ecstasy. 'I can imagine nothing more glorious!'

The exclamation struck me as being somewhat incredible. Looking up in surprise, I found that she had not been paying heed to my words at all; her lips parted, she stood gazing with sparkling eyes across the greensward to where the carriage-drive wound down beneath the elm trees towards the park gates. Along this stretch of road a tandem bicycle was being ridden at a hot pace.

'Great Caesar!' I cried, on catching sight of the distant scorcher, 'that's Bertha, isn't it? And the other—no, it can't be'—

'Is Captain Moston,' interposed Joan eagerly. 'Every morning they go for a spin as far as Brakesley and back. Mustn't it be just glorious? The sense of freedom, of buoyancy, of swift joy, of life and power, of—of— Oh, how I envy them!'

'Every morning?' I repeated confusedly. 'Bertha and Captain Moston? I don't think I quite understand.'

'Hasn't Bertha told you? She and Captain Moston have been great friends ever so long, and they have become— But there, now, I'm betraying strict confidences. I ought not to have said a word about it; but I made sure she would have told her own brother.'

'That's her way of informing me of the fact,' replied I, pointing towards the flying figures. 'And, all things considered, she might have chosen a worse method. Bertha possesses more tact than I ever gave her credit for. I only hope I may hit upon as equally pleasant and original a plan for acquainting her with my engagement'—

'Your engagement!' murmured Joan, with a manifest effort to control herself that set my heart thumping for joy. 'You—engaged?'

'To teach you cycling.'

'Oh! I thought you meant—something else.'

'Since it's clear your regular instructor will not be available to-day, may I ask you to consider my proposal, Joan?'

'It's good of you to offer, Tom. I'm afraid you'll find me a terribly backward pupil, and I know I shall never be able to get on by myself.'

'Then allow me to help you. First, you place your right foot on the pedal—so; now I lift you to the saddle and keep you there firmly, securely'—

'Oh, but I didn't mean that, you stupid boy! And need you hold me *quite* so tightly? My other teacher did not.'

'By George, I should hope not, indeed! He couldn't put his whole heart and soul into the matter as I can—that is, if I am to consider myself definitely engaged.'

'Well, not definitely, Tom; say temporarily, until I see how you suit.'

'With any prospect of a permanency, Joan?' asked I unsteadily. 'I'm serious now; you cannot have misunderstood'—

'Oh Tom—hold me! I'm go—go—going! There, you nearly let me tumble over that time! Why, I don't believe you're a bit abler instructor than the other one, after all. You may be stronger, and have better theories as to— Why, here's Harold himself! Now, isn't that tiresome? Just when we were managing so nicely too!'

As Joan spoke, my uncle's Young Hopeful came loping along the path, breathless and spent with the haste he had made.

'Awfully sorry I'm so late, Miss Bellinger,' gasped he. 'Some silly idiot fastened me into my bedroom this morning, and it took me a beastly long time to screw off the lock with my penknife. I've half a notion it was one of Captain Moston's jokes.'

'Captain Moston?' said I, my hand going instinctively into my pocket, where lay the incriminating key.

'Yes; our rooms are close together, you know—his two doors to the right of yours, just as mine is two doors to the left. But I'll find some dodge to pay him out for this lark before I'm a day older, you bet. And now, Miss Bellinger, if it isn't too late to begin'—

'I rather fancy it is, Harold,' I hastened to put in.

'For me, you mean?' exclaimed he, grinning. 'Well, I guessed something of the sort when I saw you here. I'd better clear out, eh? So I'll ta-ta now, and leave you. Go ahead, old chap! I never like to spoil sport.'

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O'ER SEA AND LAND.

By MRS WILL C. HAWKSLEY,

AUTHOR OF 'LESS THAN KIN,' 'OUT OF DARKNESS,' &c.

PROLOGUE.

ALONG the narrow streets of an Indian town bands of dusky-skinned troopers were rushing, flourishing blood-stained swords and uttering cries of fanatical hatred; and in one of the rooms of a small bungalow, situated but a few feet back from the main road, stood two Englishmen, listening to the sounds without. Their faces were pale and terror-stricken; their ears were filled with the horrible yells of 'Dín-Dín! Death to the Faringhis!' For it was the morning of Monday, May 11, 1857; and the city in which they found themselves caged was Delhi, a spot of awful memories from that fatal day henceforward.

During many minutes not a word had been exchanged between the pair. The oppression of fear had been, indeed, too great to allow of much speech from the moment when first they had listened to the rumoured tale of yesterday's fearful butchery at Meerut. With yet deepening forebodings they had together watched the mad oncoming of the mutineers, as the rebel Sepoys soon after eight o'clock had crossed the bridge of boats. Then, still together, they had made for the poor shelter of this almost defenceless house. Such shutters and doors as could be closed they had bolted and barred. And since then they had been waiting in silence—waiting for what?

They were men differing in age and appearance; differing also, as was at once obvious, in social standing and mutual relation. The elder, Douglas Mannering, a merchant who had for years made his home in Delhi, was tall and of commanding presence. His hair was almost white, and his complexion told of long residence in the sultry land. Jabez Blake, his chief-cashier and clerk, was, on the other hand, short and

thick-set, with a lowering countenance and unsteady gaze. He had accompanied his employer back from England two years ago, after the last visit which Mr Mannering had paid to his native land. Thankfully did the trader, even at this moment of absorbing peril, call to mind that visit, when he had placed his twelve-year-old son in the hands of careful guardians and in the safety of an English home. But Blake had no thought to spare for any but himself. His mental faculties were, indeed, for the time paralysed by fright.

It was the merchant who first broke the stillness, if that could be called a stillness which was but a calm surrounded by storm, a quietude rent and pierced by the noise of outside strife.

'Blake,' he said, 'we shall probably neither of us see to-morrow. But in case either should get through, there are certain arrangements to be made. Have you any messages to send that I could deliver?'

His voice was wonderfully calm and clear. Though his calling had been one of peace, Douglas Mannering had a bold and courageous soul. But Jabez Blake had not been born for a hero. His teeth chattered as he tried to reply.

'None! Nothing! Do you really believe the danger to be so pressing? Will they murder us in cold blood?'

The other smiled with his pale lips, and held up his hand, pointing towards the unseen, tumult-filled street.

'Not much cold blood there,' he answered. 'Honestly, I think there is but little hope. However, attend to my instructions, please. At least, if you can,' he added, with a touch of half-contemptuous pity in his accent. 'I will under-

take that, should you die and I escape, your little girl shall be my charge. She shall be made a rich woman, in memory of the father whom I brought out here to die.'

'Yes,' answered Blake, with sudden, sullen resentment; 'you are right. It was you who led me into this.'

Mr Mannering's eyes flashed fire. None but he and Jabez fully knew the depth of the slough from which his rescuing hand had drawn the man who thus dared to reproach him. But beyond a glance he showed no heed of the ingratitude.

'If, on the contrary, I am the one to be left behind here, I appoint you my trustee,' he recommenced in his measured tones. 'You know that I have sold my business and realised my capital. You know, too, in what I have reinvested it.'

Blake nodded, though otherwise he scarcely accorded a pretended interest. All his being seemed given up to terror; and as a loud blow fell upon the outer door he quailed and shrank.

'Oh!' he wailed helplessly, 'is there no hole or corner where one could hide? Must we stop here to—?'

'You can see for yourself,' said Mr Mannering, waving his hand round the bare apartment. 'And to leave this roof is but to leap into the jaws of death. There is nothing to be done. So listen!—listen to me, do you hear?' sternly, as the frantic creature continued to stare aimlessly about. 'Here, by the wall, under this second plank, is the case. You lift the board thus,' stooping to show the simple trick of his *cache*, far securer that day than any more apparent safe could be, even though lined and bound with steel. 'If you are spared, you will take Ernest home his fortune. Swear it. There is yet time!'

The hammering had increased. Already there were sounds of splintering wood and bursting bolts to be distinguished amidst the wild yells of the besiegers. In another instant they would be within the walls. But Mr Mannering was not to be balked even by the unconquerable agitation of his companion, who now gave evident signs of meditating a mad and useless flight.

'Swear it,' he repeated, holding the other by the shoulder and compelling him to remain. 'Take this Bible'—catching up a well-worn volume from his own writing-table—'and say the words after me.'

And Jabez, coerced by the stronger will, kissed the book and took the oath. He would carry his master's property to his master's heir should he himself survive this time of danger.

'And give the boy my blessing,' concluded the father, loosing his clutch just as, with a heavy thud, the door nearest the road fell inwards. No opportunity was there now for retreat. In another second the fiendish faces and blood-thirsty cries of the Sepoys were all around the Englishmen. There was the flash of steel, a groan from the merchant, a wild shriek for mercy from Jabez, and the throng passed on. Ten minutes later the bungalow, despoiled of every portable article on which the marauders could lay hands, was deserted; and in the room where Douglas Mannering had imposed upon Jabez Blake his last commands were left only two motionless, prostrate forms, each lying in its separate pool of blood.

It was thus that a fellow-countryman saw and

recognised them some half-hour afterwards; but he could do nothing. The dead were beyond help or suffering, and all his powers were concentrated upon the search for his wife, who had fled, he knew not where, in uncontrollable panic. He had, however, had dealings with Mr Mannering in past days, and bore for him a great respect; and it was to his kindness that Ernest Mannering's guardian and Katie Blake's uncle subsequently owed information as to the disaster.

Only a small detail of a vast tragedy was that murder; but its consequences lived on.

CHAPTER I.

TWENTY-FOUR or twenty-five years ago Catam Vicarage was one of the prettiest and most rural-looking abodes in Kent, just as Catam village, in spite of its comparative proximity to London, was one of the quietest and quaintest of hamlets. They have altered all that by this time, of course. Exactly where the vicarage garden flourished a row of good-sized villas may now be seen; and in place of the winding walks, which Katie Blake's feet trod for more years than she can remember, there are a dozen straight stretches of gravel, each bordering a separate tennis-lawn and swarmed over by boisterous, blustering bairns.

But no fears of such impending changes oppressed the imagination of Mr Denovan as he wandered with Ernest Mannering under the bare boughs of the orchard trees. Notwithstanding the absorbing nature of the conversation in which they were engaged, he was quite consciously noting the signs of approaching spring. After having spent almost four decades in the same beloved spot and amidst the same familiar surroundings, the fading of the snowdrops and the first yellow gleam of the primroses became accustomed tokens not to be unobservantly passed by.

Yet all the time the conversation flowed on.

'You see, my dear sir,' the clergyman was saying in his precise and prosy accents, 'I know nothing of you—really nothing. You inform me that you are twenty-five and already a junior partner in your firm. I can see for myself that you are tall and well-looking, also that you have the manners of a gentleman. But, after all'—and the thin, pallid finger-tips of the right hand lightly tapped those of the left—'to what does that amount? Very little indeed, when the whole future happiness and welfare of my Katie are concerned.'

Ernest Mannering's countenance clouded over. 'I don't know that I can tell you any more, sir,' he said, thereby visibly amusing his companion, whose sense of humour was keen.

'Nor I. And what if you did? Words will never make either Katie or myself much the wiser. Yet, in the one month which she has passed with her friends at Shoreton, and during which you have mutually had the opportunity of becoming acquainted, what can she—leaving myself out of the question—have ascertained of your disposition, your temper—in short, of yourself?'

As it did not appear how to answer this plain-spoken yet courteous uncle, with a due regard to modesty, the suitor, instead of assuring him of the secure foundation on which Katie's affection rested, wisely kept silence.

'Well, Mr Mannering—but how your name carries me back to past days, when I was constantly hearing it!'

'Really?' with a very creditable simulation of interest.

'Yes. You may have been informed that Katie's father, the husband of my poor sister—by-the-by, she was twenty years my junior—was killed in the Indian Mutiny—thirteen years ago that was, when Katie was a tiny toddler of six. Such a pretty child!'

His expression softened at the picture thus conjured up. It was indeed curious to note how, every time that he mentioned his niece, the stern, handsome face lost its customary austerity. So far, that characteristic was the only lovable one which Ernest had discovered in Katie's awe-inspiring guardian.

'I'm sure she was,' with conviction. 'My father was murdered at that time too. It makes a fresh link.'—

But Mr Denovan was not thinking of fresh links, but of ancient ties; and for once he looked quite excited as he laid his hand on Ernest's sleeve.

'Where? Who was he? Never the Douglas Mannering that perished in Delhi?' he interrupted.

'Yes. Did you know him?'

There was a pause before the answer came. Memories, some sweet, but many bitter, were sweeping across the aged brain.

'No, not personally,' he said finally. 'Yet he has my lasting gratitude.' Then, rousing himself with an effort, 'Jabez Blake, Katie's father, was his head-cashier.'

'Of course!' said Ernest, clapping the side of his leg after the manner of a suddenly enlightened male person. 'Why, I've heard of Jabez Blake heaps of times! I declare it seems strange that Katie and I should not have met long ago. Our fathers fell actually side by side!'

Involuntarily the two men, the old one and the young, paused in their walk and clasped hands. But it was Mr Denovan who was the more moved. To him this event of which they spoke seemed an occurrence of yesterday. To Ernest it naturally appeared a whole lifetime away.

'Surely, then, you ought to be a very rich man?' remarked the cleric, as they resumed their saunter after that emotional episode. 'Your father had the reputation of a millionaire.'

Ernest shrugged his shoulders. His father's wealth was a sore subject with him.

'Yes. He wasn't precisely a pauper,' dryly. 'I expect, though, that his was not the only fortune that vanished during the Mutiny. Anyhow, I inherited none of it. It is to my guardian, who died about a year ago, that I owe what I do possess.'

'Ah! You are more fortunate than my Katie! Her guardian will have nothing to leave her—nothing!' the vicar said with pathos.

'The more reason why she should share with me,' was the quick rejoinder. 'Surely you can't refuse me now?'—a flush of fresh hope lighting up his almost boyish face.

But Mr Denovan's was not a nature thus to be carried by storm. Not all the agitation of the last hour could, indeed, so much as prevent a satirical reply:

'Why not? Because your father and hers were fellow-sufferers I am to be assured that you would make a desirable husband? If you had had as intimate an acquaintance with Jabez Blake as I had—— But that,' breaking off abruptly, 'is beside the question. What does concern you is my determination—a determination which, I may tell you, has been reached after many hours of consideration given to your letter.'

And then Ernest listened, with a somewhat sinking heart, to the conditions under which he might be allowed to continue his wooing: to visit at the vicarage, just as other men might visit; to make no further endeavour to bind Katie until her twentieth year was completed; to offer no loving demonstrations, but to behave himself with the most rigid propriety—such was Mr Denovan's decree.

'Because I wish to assure myself,' explained the merciless old gentleman, 'that you do not belong to that rowdy race of young men who are the bane of the nineteenth century, and whom I abhor. Smoking and drinking, and a general looseness of life, are their sole claims to distinction; and my Katie is too good for that sort of husband.'

Ernest's heart sank into his boots. Truth to tell, he loved a good cigar.

'If by the time that her birthday arrives I hear nothing to your disadvantage, why, then I will seriously consider your proposal, should you renew it; but until then you are as free as she; and I will not have her fettered yet.'

'Jolly hard this, I call it,' declared the lover, seizing the very first moment when he found himself alone with Katie to utter his protest. Miss Blake had, by the way, been meanwhile informed by her uncle—in Ernest's presence and despite her blushes—of the ultimatum. She therefore needed no explanations; yet she looked up with a laugh and the demurest of glances.

'Now, do you know, I think that, considering his little prejudices upon the subject of me, uncle has been extremely good to you,' she declared. 'Did you tell him that you belonged to the Chums, and that you didn't think tobacco another name for depravity? Or did you discreetly hold your peace? I only ask for information!'

She looked provokingly mischievous and pretty, standing with her hand upon the back of a chair, and facing him half-shyly, half-merrily. The solemn conclave had been interrupted by the advent of an important parishioner, to whom Mr Denovan had felt compelled to give an interview; and as the vicar might return at any instant, Ernest had not delayed to lessen, with all convenient speed, the distance between himself and the girl he loved.

'I held my peace,' he assured her, gazing down into the upraised face. 'At least such peace as was left me; but as to not having another kiss'—

She blushed and hung her head, at the same time warding off too pressing attentions with her hand.

'You don't seem to have a very good memory,' she remarked, with a ripple of amusement in her voice. Then suddenly she grew grave.

'Oh Ernest, how strange about our fathers! I wonder if they know about us to-day!'

It was a speculation upon which Mannering did not feel prepared to enter. Judging from Mr Denovan's hints, he had not gathered that Jabez Blake had been one to remember with affectionate sentimentality. Clearly, however, the daughter had been brought up in ignorance of any flaws in the gentleman's behaviour, and how to answer her did not appear. The vicar's step sounding in the hall might have been heard at a more unwelcome moment, even though now it precluded the end of all privacy. And half-an-hour later Ernest quitted the vicarage with the firm conviction that a courtship carried on under Mr Denovan's eye would not be without drawbacks; also that if he were ever to win Katie Blake with her uncle's permission, his life during the next eight months must be circumspect indeed.

But then Katie was worth the winning; and she had already made it very plain to him that go against the wishes of Mr Denovan she never would.

BRAERIACH.

By REV. HUGH MACMILLAN, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E.

BRAERIACH is the third highest mountain in Great Britain, ranking next to Ben Macdhui, being 4260 feet above the level of the sea. Its name sounds unfamiliar; but it does not yield in point of grandeur or interest to any of the other members of the great group of the Cairngorm range to which it belongs. On the west side it rises up from the extensive fir-forest of Rothiemurchus in a long, swelling, massive slope with immense rounded shoulders, catching alternate sunshine and shade from the passing clouds, and exhibiting even under sudden gleams of light a peculiarly gray, barren aspect. About a thousand feet from the summit the uniformity of the slope is broken up by two great corries, divided from each other by a narrow neck or ridge, connecting the shoulders of the mountain with the top. One of them is occupied by a bright-green transparent tarn, perhaps the highest lakelet in Britain, into which a streamlet falls down the face of the cliff in a series of waterfalls, presenting a magnificent sheet of unbroken foam when swollen by a storm. The corries look at a distance, when filled with the afternoon shadows, like the hollow eye-sockets of a gigantic skull. In the rifts and shady recesses patches of snow linger almost throughout the whole year, and appear dazzlingly white by contrast with the dark rocks around.

I have a very pleasant remembrance of a recent ascent of this fine mountain along with a genial companion. We followed the usual route through the forest of Rothiemurchus, past the romantic shores of Loch-an-Eilan to the head of Glen Eunach, about ten miles from the station of Aviemore on the Highland Railway. At the point where you first catch sight of Loch Eunach and the great precipices of Scorrán Dhu, beside a wooden bothy for the use of deerstalkers, we left

the road, and followed a foot-track by the side of a burn that came down from the heights, over heath and peat bogs. Mounting higher, we reached a kind of tableland, where the heather was shorter and the footing easier, and at the end of this plateau, at a considerable height from the road, we came upon a well-made zigzag track constructed by the deerstalkers for bringing down the produce of the chase. This path, with a wonderfully smooth and firm bottom of granite sand, wound up the steep breast of the mountain by a series of inclines increasing in steepness as we ascended, which severely tried our muscular powers and the capacity of our lungs. It was hot work, for the side of the hill reflected the heat of the sun and prevented the cool breeze that played around the heights from reaching us.

About half-way up we had a glorious view, from the place where we sat down to rest a little, of the upper part of Glen Eunach, into which we looked down. The head of the glen is shut in by a lofty and rugged amphitheatre of cliffs—called Corour. The north side is composed of the huge bastion of Braeriach, rising up plateau above plateau; while in front of us, on the south side, were the great precipices of Scorrán Dhu, forming peaks and spires of indescribable grandeur. The face of the perpendicular cliffs, more than two thousand feet in height, was broken up into deep rifts, with long trailing heaps of debris at their bottom, and great outstanding buttresses of rock, as if these mighty masses required additional support; and the colour of the granite was a rich dark-blue, like the bloom on a plum. The rocks had caught this hue from the sky during untold ages of exposure to sun and storm. How different from this elevation did the cliffs of the Scorrán Dhu appear than when seen at the foot of the hill! There they were foreshortened and dwarfed, and the frowning bloom which gave such an awe-inspiring look to them vanished to a pale-brown hue, almost like that of ordinary granite. Only at their own height can mountains and men be truly measured!

In all the district there is not a grander view than this. Loch Eunach, as it reposes in the hollow between those great cliffs and mountains, with their gloomy shadows cast down upon its wind-swept waters breaking into frequent curves of foam, equals, if not surpasses, the wonderfully wild view of Loch Avon from the heights of Ben Macdhui above it. In that weird caldron of the storms, that den 'where,' as Wordsworth boldly says, 'the earthquake might hide her cubs,' the imagination could revel in the most dreadful shapes of ancient superstition. We do not wonder that before the Highland fancy, in such lonely places, visions of water-bulls and ghostly water-kelpies should form themselves out of the gathering mists. To be alone on the shores of such a loch during a tempest would be the height of sublimity. Ossian and the Inferno would be seen in the writhing mists and foaming waters and frowning

rocks, appearing and disappearing through the clouds; and the howling of the winds would seem like the spirits of the lost. Even on the brightest summer day, when sitting on the pure white granite sand at the margin of the loch, one seems like sitting 'on the shore of old romance,' and has an eerie feeling, as if the veil that separated the seen from the unseen were thinner in this place than anywhere else, and might be lifted at any moment and some uncanny shape appear.

At the end of the deerstalkers' path we came to what is called 'the saddle' of the mountain—an extensive plateau covered with broken fragments of granite, over which it was somewhat difficult to walk. From this plateau a steep ridge ascended, also covered with granite stones, interspersed with tufts of moss and patches of arctic willow. The heather had disappeared a considerable distance below, and here and there cushions of the lovely moss-campion, starred with its numerous crimson blossoms, formed a soft sward. The round, crinkled leaves of the cloud-berry, without its white blossom, appeared in the moister places—the badge of the clan Macfarlane. The ridge we were traversing broke off abruptly at the edge of the steep, rugged precipices of the eastern corrie. Carefully avoiding the dangerous edge, we climbed up the steep side of the ridge, and reached an elevated plain, extending northwards for nearly a mile. This plain was paved with smooth granite slabs; and here and there were patches of turf covered with the softest moss, and large spaces of granite sand, channelled by the melting snows, which linger here far into summer, and by the sudden rills of water formed by the storms. Amongst the detritus, where the quartz is more abundant, a few pieces of cairngorm stones may be picked up, but of no great beauty or value. The flat granite slabs had hardly any of the moss and lichen vegetation which at such elevations usually covers the surface of exposed rocks. They were singularly bare, and marked only by the black charred fragments of the tripe-de-roche lichen—a species of *Gyrophora*, which Franklin and his companions were compelled to eat in the Arctic regions in the absence of all other food. Among the stony debris a little rill flowed from the side of a higher point of the hill to the right, and lined its course with the softest and greenest moss, which was inexpressibly pleasant to the eye in the desolate wilderness. The water was delightfully bright and cold, and nearer the haunts of man would have been an invaluable treasure. As it was, a draught from its crystal goblet was most refreshing. Nowhere is the water so exquisitely clear as among these granite mountains. The beauty of the many rills that cross one's path is most fascinating. You can hardly tear yourself away from the charm of the little transparent pools with their edges of emerald moss, and from the sweet gurgling sound they make in the awe-struck silence, and the delicious coldness of the sparkling water, which you are tempted at every step to scoop up with your hand and drink, infusing new vigour into your parched frame. The granite rock holds these rills like a crystal goblet, and from its hard sides no particle is worn away to pollute the purity of the element or taint its brilliant lustre.

The scent of the beneficent waters nourished some sparse vegetation on the upland plain which we were traversing, among which I noticed large tufts of a dark chocolate-coloured moss, called the alpine Andrea; while patches of alpine Azalea creeping along the soil, but destitute of blossoms, and cushions of woolly fringe moss (*Trichostomum*) strove to carpet the ground and prevent the weathering of the granite rocks. But there was nothing else in the way of botany to attract our attention. Braeriach is much poorer in alpine vegetation than the other members of the great group of which it forms a part. Ben Macdhui has some rare flowering-plants, and Cairngorm is rich in lichens and mosses, the snow-white curly tufts of the *Cetraria* and the tangled creeping sulphur-coloured filaments of the *Cornicularia* being abundant on the slope near the cairn. The blue alpine sow-thistle (*Mulgedium alpinum*), one of the rare treasures of this region, is not found on Braeriach, being confined almost entirely to the northern ridge of the great corrie of Loch-nagar, although at one time it must have spread over the whole range of the Cairngorm mountains. The most interesting form of vegetable life on Braeriach is the *Hieracium nigrescens*, the black-headed hawkweed, which is pretty frequent on the rocks of the western corries. There are several other species of hawkweed found on this mountain, which are considered rare and peculiar, but most of them are evidently only varieties of a few species not yet determined, differing according to soil and situation.

When we compare the flora on the summits of the Cairngorm range with the flora on the tops of the Breadalbane mountains, we see an extraordinary contrast in point of variety and luxuriance between the two habitats. The poverty and inferiority of the Cairngorm flora may be attributed to several causes—to the comparative dryness of the climate, to the sterility of the granite soil, and to the generally inhospitable character of the contour of the hills, affording few crevices and ledges and shady corners in which alpine plants may find shelter and security. On the Breadalbane mountains, on the other hand, the frequent clouds and rain, the fertility of the micaceous soil, and the rugged and varied outlines into which the micaceous schist of which they are composed breaks up under the weather, favour a most remarkable profusion of the rarest and most interesting species of alpine plants in Britain. On the Cairngorm range the most interesting plants are not found on the summits, but in the corries and passes at a considerably lower elevation. In the Larich Ghru Pass, between the shoulders of Braeriach (which southern readers may be glad to know is pronounced like Bray-rec-agh) and Ben Macdhui, the highest part of which is 2750 feet above the level of the sea, making it the highest pass in Britain, which is hardly ever free from clouds and mists, there is a great abundance of alpine plants of the commoner sorts. Among these may be seen the rare *Saxifraga rivularis* and immense quantities of *Cornus suecica*, growing among the whortleberry bushes along the banks of the stream, a most attractive and noticeable plant alike when it puts forth its curious snow-white blossoms, with black tufts of stamens and pistils in the centre, or when it is crowned with one or two scarlet transparent berries.

After crossing the wide, desolate plain already alluded to, we passed to the north, where the ground rose a good deal higher, and in a short time surmounted the ridge. On the highest point of the plateau to the right the cairn came into view, hardly to be distinguished from the débris around, and concealed until you come to it by a rugged pile of semi-detached blocks—constituting the overhanging face of a precipice—which look as if they had been artificially built. With a sigh of relief we sat down on a granite boulder and gazed around. We began the ascent about one o'clock, and it was now nearly four o'clock in the afternoon; having consumed about three hours in the very leisurely ascent from the base in Glen Eunach.

The wind was pretty high and very cold, interfering with our comfort; but the distances were wonderfully clear, though the sky was covered in some parts with dark ominous clouds, which threatened to descend in mist or rain and made us feel a little anxious. It is not safe to be caught in mist on the summit of Braeriach, for the level plateau suddenly, without any warning, breaks down into the most formidable line of precipices to be found in Britain, extending for upwards of two miles, and a single false step in the cloudy darkness might precipitate one into the awful gulf. The cairn which crowns the highest point is only two or three yards from the brink of this tremendous precipice, and it is dangerous to stand between it and the edge in a high wind—and even in calm weather, unless you have a cool head. The gathering clouds, while not obstructing the distant views, gave them a peculiarly sombre aspect, increasing the height of the mountains and deepening the gloom of the valleys, and brightening by contrast the flashing gleam of the multitude of lakes and streams that diversified the vast landscape.

One sometimes sees very peculiar atmospheric effects among these mountains. I remember, when descending on one occasion from the summit of Cairngorm, which was enveloped in a dense mist, and coming to a lower part of the mountain, where the mist was thinning out to mere wisps of vapour before finally vanishing into the clear sunny air below, how every object in the wide view appeared of an extraordinary blue colour, varying from the palest shade to the darkest tint. Only by these varying shades of hue could the different objects be distinguished. The mountains appeared a dark cobalt, the green forests and valleys of an indigo shade, and the lakes and streams of the brightest silvery blue. The particles of vapour acted like a vast number of prisms so set that they refracted this uniform cerulean tint upon all the landscape, and gave it an appearance as if the blue summer sky had been inverted, or as if earth and heaven had changed places. It was a remarkable phenomenon.

Near the cairn there is an angle formed by a deep gully in the gigantic wall of precipices, down which you can look and obtain a most magnificent view of the vast gorge which separates Braeriach from Cairntoul—a disconsolate glen, hating as it were its own gloom that kept it leafless and desolate; and farther beyond, of the lower reaches of the Larich Ghru Pass; and in the distance, of the green valley of the Dee, with its richly-wooded banks, with the majestic form of

Lochnagar crowning the landscape. Cairntoul, which rises up across the gorge to almost the same height as Braeriach, is the most striking member of the Cairngorm range. Its shape is much more pyramidal than the others, and its double top is formed of huge granite boulders piled up like a gigantic cairn. At a great height on its side is a corrie filled with a beautiful little circular lake, which shows as green as an emerald in the afternoon light, and is called from its colour 'Loch-an-Uaine.' In the wild gorge between the two mountains you see the white waters of the Garrochory burn issuing from this small lake. Near the summit of Braeriach, at the north-west extremity, are five springs which are perennial, and are called the 'Wells of Dee.' The rills from these springs unite a little lower down the mountain at an elevation of about 4000 feet, and farther on to the southward join the Garrochory. These wells are supposed to form the principal source of the Dee. At this height you cannot distinguish the varied tones of the minstrelsy of the stream as it breaks into foam among the numerous boulders in its course; but you hear instead an all-pervading sigh or murmur in the air, like the distant echo of the shout of a multitude, which has an indescribably grand effect upon the mind. From the same source also come two other wild alpine torrents, the Gentsachan and the Geauley, which unite farther down to form the Dee, a full-bodied river at this point, that flows due east towards cultivation, where it exchanges the gigantic shadow of the desolate mountains for the beautiful lowland scenery on its banks.

To the north-east the dark-fretted rocks of Craig-an-Gechan, or the Lurcher's Crag, which form the precipitous wall on one side of the Larich Pass, appeared prominently in view; and beyond them the long, level summit of Ben Macdui, gleaming red in the level afternoon light, surrounded by the wild grandeur of the crags about Loch Etachan and Loch Avon—'the grisly cliffs that guard the infant rills of Highland Dee.' In this northward direction Ben Wyvis, in Ross-shire, revealed itself like a dim cloud in the far distance. To the westward the highest point of Ben Nevis stormed the heavens, and gathered a fringe of dark clouds around its brow. Southwards the eye identified one after another the familiar heights of Ben Lawers, Schiehallion, Ben More, Ben Cruachan, Ben Ledi, and Ben Vuirlich. To the eastward dark Lochnagar reared its crest above the surrounding mountains in that quarter, while the horizon of the south-east was bounded by the round shoulders of Ben-y-Ghlo. The panorama of the whole Highlands of Scotland seemed to spread out in one uninterrupted view before me—a tumultuous ocean of dark mountains, with here and there the solid mass crested with glistening snow.

The great group of the Cairngorm range forms the roof of Scotland, and occupies the most imposing elevated ground in Britain. The boundary between the counties of Aberdeen and Inverness runs along the ledge of Braeriach, and is one of the grandest lines of delimitation in the kingdom. Seated beside the cairn, the eye can command a distinct view of the southern bend of the great rampart of precipices at the back of the mountain; and it is an awe-inspiring sight. The broad

tableland drops sheer down in a mighty, solid cliff without ridge or crevice to break its uniformity. So perpendicular is its brow that hardly a moss or lichen finds footing on it; and the red, naked granite frowns against the sky-line with an angry glare, as if daring the most intrepid visitor to stand on its giddy edge and look over. Gazing on the sublime picture of solitary grandeur spread out before me, in which the wild chaos of mountains had swallowed up all traces of man's presence, and not a single human habitation or sign of cultivation was visible in all the immeasurable horizon, I felt to the full the inspiration of the scene. So quickened is the pulse, so elevated the feelings, that one hour in such a situation is worth a whole month on the tame level of ordinary life in the city or on the plain. The mind receives a keener edge, and is quick to perceive the interest that is not only in the great whole of the view, but also in the smallest details of it. And even a piece of stone, or a cushion of moss beside one's feet, appeals to the intellect and heart in a way that is never yielded to amid the commonplace circumstances of ordinary life. You notice objects in such a place that never attract your attention on the low ground.

How beautiful does the geographical lichen (*Lecidea geographica*) look to you, covering the surface of a piece of quartz with the living mosaic of its primrose-yellow thallus, interspersed with black lines and dots like the towns and rivers of a map, and you reflect that this lowly lichen marks the extreme limit of arctic, antarctic, and alpine vegetation on the globe, and is the last effort of expiring Nature to crown the desolate rocks with life! How curious are the slender, white, wormy-looking stems of the *Cladonia vermicularis*, as they twist themselves among the black, peaty mosses! You would think that some one with a bag of vermicelli had dropped its contents on the ground. Among them the turf is ploughed up by the hoofs of red-deer as they pass to and fro over the crest of the mountain. But this was the only sign of them we saw on that occasion. Animal life was conspicuous by its absence; but a few ptarmigan flew close to us among the rocks, uttering their low, clucking cry, their plumage in the process of changing from the snowy hue of winter to the mottled gray colours of summer, harmonising in a wonderful manner with the lichen-covered cliffs which they frequent, and so helping to conceal them from their enemies. The mystery of the mountain is in the eye of the lowly wild-flower that strives in a forlorn way to embellish the brown weather-beaten turf; and every tuft of grass that waves in the wind, and every little rill that trickles in the silence, seem to be conscious of the sublimity of the spot. Problems of the original upheaval by some mighty internal force of the mass of primary rock which forms the base of the whole group of mountains occupy and stimulate the mind. The granite detritus, of which you take up a handful from the ground beside your feet, and pass like sand through your fingers, seems like Nature's great hour-glass speaking to you of worlds that have passed away in ages for which you have no reckoning, of universal decay and death; and you are reminded that these seemingly everlasting mountains are perishing slowly, when measured by man's notions of time, but surely; for, as the

poet tells us, they are only clouds a little more stable and enduring, that change their shapes and flow from form to form, and at last disappear for ever in the eternal blue.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

By FRED WHISHAW.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MEANWHILE the student's 'act of attestation,' together with the reports and endorsements relating to Philipof's subsequent conduct, was duly laid before the Emperor. The Tsar read the chief document once, and then read it again. Then he passed his eye over the endorsement, and glanced at the report of the police-officer. Then he summoned Dostoief.

'Volódya,' said his Majesty, as Vladimir Dostoief obeyed his summons and entered the well-known corner-room at the Winter Palace, the favourite apartment of Alexander II., and which has never been touched from the day of his death to this—'Volódya, read this; forget that the man is your relative by marriage, and tell me your honest opinion.'

Dostoief took the papers, started as he first became aware of their purport, and then continued to read calmly to the end, honestly endeavouring to bring to bear upon the subject an even and unprejudiced mind. He read the document, with all its reports and addenda, twice through, just as the Emperor had done; then he sighed and laid the packet upon the table.

'I fear there is little doubt, your Majesty,' he said; 'there can be but one opinion.'

'Maybe; but do not answer for others. Your own opinion is all I ask,' said the Emperor. 'You are afraid we have made a grand mistake and terribly injured an innocent man—is that it? Then we will make a grand reparation, Dostoief. I am inclined to think with you.'

'Your Majesty has quite mistaken my meaning,' said Dostoief. 'What I meant to convey was that I fear there is little doubt as to this Philipof's guilt. The unhappy man was an accomplice of the dead rogue, Smirnof. Together they planned and carried out the infamous attempt upon your Majesty's sacred person five years ago; together they were imprisoned for it; and together they ought to have been hung for their offence. But they outwitted us, sire, by accusing each the other, and thus both saved their necks through your clemency. Again, one member of this precious confederacy of guilt dies, like a dog, in the streets, and in order to reinstate his partner and set him loose once more upon society, he draws up in dying an impudent vindication of his surviving confederate, who, even at the very moment that his friend is dictating the document, is actually engaged in assisting revolutionists to escape the custody of the police, and who, afterwards, is seen deliberately and openly in communication with one who is known to be a dangerous "suspect."'

The Tsar appeared to be disappointed and grieved to hear Dostoief's reading of the problem.

'I am sorry that this should be your opinion,' he said, with a sigh. 'I am well aware, Dostoief, that your loyalty is perfect; but does not your

love for myself incline you to be harsh in your judgment of this poor fellow? In your anxiety to serve me well, you must be careful not to err on the side of severity. How dreadful if it were some day to turn out that we had wronged this man from beginning to end!

'I am afraid there is no likelihood of that,' said Dostoief; and it may be supposed that he believed himself to be entirely in earnest.

'At all events we need not be in a hurry to condemn,' said the Tsar; 'and it appears to me that we shall best judge of the rights and wrongs of the matter by carefully watching the career of this Philipof. If he be a *vaurien*, as you fear, you may be sure he will betray himself before long, if unmolested; on the other hand, if his behaviour should be irreproachable, I shall be inclined to think well of Smirnof's dying attestation. You shall bid the police, Volódya, leave the man absolutely to himself. Let us judge him without regard to his past. It is in my mind, my friend, that we may possibly be doing this relative of your wife's a terrible injustice. You do not think so, I see. Well, thanks for your devotion to my person; but think more kindly of your poor relative, if you can.'

Dostoief looked dubious. 'Your Majesty, with your usual clemency, is inclined to lean to the side of mercy,' he said. 'I wish I could think with you, sire; but your heart was ever a gentle and sympathetic one, while I, who am but a rough soldier, incline only towards plain justice, as I discern it in facts plainly proved.'

And so it happened that the student's 'act' was left open for consideration, though it secured for Philipof what he was destined to find presently a great convenience—namely, immunity from police interference.

Meanwhile the day came round for that important meeting of the brotherhood at which Doonya was to learn what was expected of her as an alternative to the capital sentence involved in the receipt of a green ticket, and Philipof despatched his friend in the dusk of evening to the appointed rendezvous. He accompanied her as far as was desirable, though not within a quarter of a mile of her destination, and there he bade her farewell and a brave spirit.

'I swear they shall not hurt you, my Doonya,' were his last words. 'I have my plans, and shall tell you all when you return. Don't be longer than you can help, for remember that I anxiously await your coming. I shall be on board the yacht at ten.'

With this parting encouragement ringing in her ears, Doonya went boldly into the very den of the lion. It had come to this, that she would gladly have gone into the very jaws of death at Philipof's bidding.

As for Philipof himself, he paid a visit to his little nephew and niece, Matrona again proving absolutely faithless and disobedient towards her employer, whose orders were that Philipof should not, under any circumstances, be allowed access to the children; and for a full hour did uncle Sasha sit upon little Petka's bed and tell the oft-told and favourite, and exceedingly indiscreet, story of the unfortunate officer who was persecuted by an unappreciative sovereign. And again that potentate was criticised by the juvenile lips, and held up to scorn, and compared with the present wicked

Emperor, who prevented a father from visiting his own children.

When the little ones had chattered enough, and had heard stories told until the despair of irresistible sleep descended upon their eyes, and the kindly and punctual god of slumber had so dulled their ears that they could exercise their office no longer, Philipof bade them good-night and walked up towards far Podnefsky, the grain wharf, where No. 15 lay nearly loaded. Doonya had not arrived, and Philipof paced the quay, up and down, to the great wonder of the night-watchman, who knew him by sight, and therefore did not interfere; but who informed his friends afterwards that the superintendent of Messrs Higginbottom & Co., the great grain shippers, was as mad as a March hare, and was not content with working all day at the wharf, but must needs come and spend the night in walking up and down the quay as well. Had Philipof happened to encounter a spy or emissary from the brotherhood during this nightly perambulation, there would have been a plunge and a swim for that agent, for Philipof was in the mood to stand no nonsense from the brotherhood or any one else.

Doonya arrived at last, and had a terrible tale to tell. Her nerves were very shaky with the trying ordeal she had just passed through; and though she began by declaring that she was not frightened and entirely trusted Sasha to rescue her from the position she was placed in, yet she several times burst into tears before she could bring herself to commence her story.

The general meeting, it appeared, had been a very short one; but she and two others had been summoned to attend at the inner circle afterwards. The five members of that body had been draped and masked in order to avoid the possibility of recognition, and the president himself, the terrible No. 1, had revealed the enterprise in which the three condemned persons were invited to take part.

This enterprise was, of course, the plot against the Emperor's life, of which mention has already been made. Doonya was to be armed with pistols, and to be provided with a stall in the fourth row from the orchestra on the left side of the Grand Theatre, commonly called the *Bolshoi Thedter*, close under the private imperial box. In case his Majesty should occupy this, instead of the large state box in the centre of the *Bel-étage*, Doonya was to be ready, and to shoot him down the instant he appeared. The other two 'sentenced' persons were to occupy places close to the state box and the grand entrance respectively. Such was the alternative offered to them as to Doonya. Answers were to be handed in on the following morning to Doctor Kirilof, who was known to all; and in the evening, should either of the three have chosen self-effacement in preference to the honourable employment offered them as an alternative, Doctor Kirilof would return with certificate of death. Of course every precaution would be taken against any attempt either by Doonya or the others to betray the society rather than conform to its injunctions. It was all very simple. Doonya must consent, to-morrow morning, to be a party to the most infamous of murders, if not the actual assassin, or in the evening, when the Doctor called a

second time, she must be dead and ready to be certificated. But when the girl had finished her tale, Philipof laughed and said it was ludicrous that people generally supposed to be so cautious and astute should act so childishly as this precious inner circle had acted to-night. They had evidently lost sight of the fact that he, Philipof, was by to protect Doonya.

'But, my Sasha,' Doonya wailed, 'you cannot—how can you protect me? You can pitch Kirilof into the water when he comes, of course; but that will not help us. Violence will not save me, my soul. The circle can employ a host of messengers; they will not rest until their horrible will is accomplished; you will be murdered as well as I, my beloved, and that is all that will come of your heroism and resource!'

'Listen here, Doonya,' said Philipof; 'do you not see how the land lies? These people have told you their secret. Very well. You cannot reveal it, because you are probably watched, and because they rely upon your terror of themselves for getting their will of you. You will either perform your share of the work in hand, they think, or drink this stuff here. But, you see, you have told me this secret, and I intend to use my knowledge to our mutual advantage. I dare say there is some fellow outside now at this moment watching to see that you do not escape to Cronstadt in this lighter. First of all I am going to settle accounts with that gentleman. In the morning we will see what we can make of the good Doctor. Sleep well to-night, my love, for—trust me—I have this affair well in hand.'

DIAMONDS—AS MADE BY NATURE AND BY MAN.

By JOHN B. C. KERSHAW.

ELECTRICITY, as an agent in the hands of man, has during the half-century that is about to close received many striking applications and has achieved many triumphs. One of the latest, but by no means the least, of these is that relating to its use in the electric-furnace as a means of producing extremely high temperatures, for its application as a source of heat has led to the discovery of the method by which Nature made her diamonds and other precious stones. Until the year 1777, the diamond was believed to be a kind of rock-crystal, and its close connection with one of the most plentiful and least valuable of all the chemical elements—carbon—was not proved until the early years of this century. If the old alchemists who worked so industriously through the Middle Ages had only known this fact, the transmutation of the baser metals into gold, which at that time was the problem to the solution of which all their efforts were directed, would have ceased to attract. To convert at will dirty, black, valueless carbon into the transparent flashing crystals of almost priceless value, they would have felt, was a problem far more worthy their attention and study. But these old experimenters, with their lofty aims and desire to transmute all baser metals into gold, and to dis-

cover an elixir of life, were not gifted in the art of reading Nature's mysteries; and it is quite certain that, had they known that the diamond was merely a crystalline form of carbon, they would have failed in their attempts to produce it in their laboratories.

Lavoisier, the distinguished French chemist, in the years 1770–1780 carried out experiments which proved that the diamond, when strongly heated in air, burns away, and that the gases produced contain carbonic acid. Sir Humphry Davy in 1814 completed the proof by showing that no water is produced by this combustion, and that consequently the diamond is formed of one element only—carbon. Since that date until the present decade little further progress had been made in our knowledge of the diamond. In the year 1892 a celebrated French chemist named Moissan commenced to experiment upon this subject; and, with a clue to Nature's method of manufacture given by the discovery of minute diamonds in some specimens of meteoric iron, he was soon able to announce to the French Academie des Sciences that this problem was solved, and that he had been successful in producing diamonds in his laboratory at Paris.

The chief agent in this success was the electric-furnace, with which Moissan had attained temperatures hitherto far beyond the chemist's command—temperatures which approach those at present existing in our sun. The electric-arc light is now so commonly used that there are few who have not seen the arc-lamps being cleaned, and who have not observed the two carbon-pencils, between the points of which the arc is formed. The electric current, in passing across the air-gap between the carbon points, develops not only intense light but also a most intense heat; and if the carbon-pencils be enclosed in a suitably-shaped fireclay box to guard against the loss of heat by radiation, the modern electric-furnace is obtained. The fireclay case is generally lined with lime or prepared charcoal in order to protect it from the intense heat of the arc; whilst in some cases a lining of the materials which are to be heated is used as well.

In such a furnace, using large currents of electricity, temperatures of between 3000° and 4000° C. have been obtained; and many compounds of carbon and silicon with the metals have been formed that were hitherto unknown or that had only been found in Nature.

The diamonds which Moissan has been able to produce by his method in Paris are artificial only in the sense that they are the product of the laboratory. They possess the hardness, clearness, high refractive power, and form of those found in Nature; their only deficiency is in size, the largest Moissan has yet produced being only one-twenty-fifth of an inch in diameter. The method used by Moissan is as follows:

Pure iron is melted in a carbon crucible by means of the electric current, and into this molten iron a cylinder of iron, charged with specially prepared sugar charcoal, is dropped. When the whole mass has attained a very high temperature the crucible is withdrawn, and is plunged into cold water, or into a bath of molten lead. After a thick crust of solid metal has

formed, the further cooling is allowed to take place in air; and, when quite cold, the iron mass is attacked with acids, in order to dissolve the metal in which the diamonds are embedded. This treatment with acids is continued until all the iron has been removed; and then other chemicals are used to destroy the grains of graphite. The residue which remains after this treatment is composed of minute diamonds and small fragments of carbonado, or impure diamond.

The theory that Moissan has advanced to explain his method is, that certain metals which take carbon into solution or combination at high temperatures, when submitted to great pressure and rapid cooling, deposit this carbon in the crystalline form known as diamond.

Iron and silver are the two metals which most readily show this dissolving property for carbon; and since iron is so much the cheaper, it is generally used in these experiments. Iron is also a metal which expands on solidifying. Hence, when a mass of molten iron has become invested with a shell of solid metal, the solidification of the inner mass is attended by tremendous pressure on the outer shell; and the cooling thus produces the conditions required for the separation of the dissolved carbon in the crystalline form.

Since the artificial production of diamonds in the laboratory is thus shown to be a question simply of high temperature and of great pressure, it becomes of interest to inquire how Nature obtained these conditions when producing her diamonds in a bygone day. There are two theories based upon these successful experiments of Moissan. According to the one, Nature formed her diamonds deep down in the earth at an early period of its geological history. According to the other, she formed them, and is still forming them, in those fragments of matter which we call meteorites; and all the diamonds we possess are presents from the outer world of space.

In both cases the necessary conditions—a molten mass at a high temperature, and great pressure during cooling—would obtain.

This earth was once a glowing ball of molten matter, enveloped in clouds of hot and sulphurous vapour—a reproduction on a small scale of our own sun at the present time. As the centuries rolled on this fiery ball became invested with a crust of solid rock; and as the cooling process continued this crust grew slowly in thickness, and those mighty forces began to operate which, acting suddenly, have torn the earth's crust asunder, and have produced chasms, faults, and precipices; or, acting more gradually, have raised the continents above the seas, and have caused the mountains to overlook the plains. Within this solid crust there was still the glowing, fiery heart of molten matter, compressed with a mighty force, and finding occasional vent through the volcanoes of that primeval time. We can easily conceive that diamonds formed under such conditions would be larger and finer than any it is within man's power to produce. Their transportation from the deeper levels where they were first formed to the surface of the earth's crust is explained by volcanic action. The famed Kimberley diamond-mines consist of immense 'pipes' of 'blue earth,' in which the diamonds are fairly evenly distributed; and all the appear-

ances at this 'diamond-field' are in support of the theory that a mud-volcano once existed on this spot, and brought up the clay and diamonds from the lower levels of the earth's strata.

The second theory, which ascribes diamonds to a meteoric origin, may be correct in certain cases; but it is not very applicable to such a wonderfully valuable mine as that of the De Beers at Kimberley, which has produced in the last ten years diamonds worth many millions of pounds sterling, and is still supplying the whole of the world's demand.

Turning now to the gems of lesser value and beauty, we find that they are all crystalline forms of commonly-occurring chemical substances. Thus, oxide of aluminium is found as clay everywhere, and in its purest form—as kaolin—is worth about a penny per pound. When crystallised it is known as ruby, sapphire, emerald, and amethyst, the varying colours of these gems being due to the small amounts of other substances associated with the alumina. Similarly, oxide of silicon, or 'silica,' is one of the most commonly-occurring substances, and in its ordinary forms is known as quartz and sand. The precious stones, chalcedony, jasper, and opal, are, however, simply silica in a rarer crystalline form.

Though as yet these gems have not all been produced artificially in the laboratory of the chemist by the aid of the electric-furnace, there is strong evidence for the belief that the general principles of the method used by Moissan for the production of the diamond will be found applicable in the case of these other gems, and that alumina or silica dissolved at high temperature in some suitable solvent will separate in the crystalline forms desired when this solvent is subjected to great pressure during cooling. The question immediately arises as to how far greater experience and skill in the use of this method will lead to increase in the size of the crystals produced. Are we to expect that in the near future diamonds and other gems possessing not only the brilliancy and colour, but also the magnitude of those found in the earth's crust will be produced at will by the modern electro-metallurgist in his laboratory, and that the manufacture of gems will become an industry of recognised and permanent importance? A paragraph which appeared in one of the New York papers last year informed us that a New York professor (!) had, indeed, arranged to commence the manufacture of gems at Niagara, the intention being to use electrical energy supplied by the power station at the Falls. The New York professor (!) has, however, not yet started his manufactory; and it is the writer's opinion that he never will. When one recalls to mind the mighty masses of molten matter and the gigantic forces which have been used by Nature to produce these precious stones, upon which we set so much value, and compares with these the infinitely smaller scale upon which man, even with a Niagara to supply the electrical energy, is constrained to work, the idea that the products of man's efforts can ever rival in size or brilliancy the gems produced by Nature deep down in the bowels of the earth is seen to be laughably absurd. Man the chemist is but a pigmy, even in his grandest moments, when he measures himself against Nature, the great arch-chemist of the universe; and the gems formed with a few pounds

of iron in a small pot can never rival those formed in a molten world rushing through infinite space, with thousands of years wherein to perfect their slow growth in size and beauty.

HOW THEY TOOK THE *OLGA* OUT.

A STORY OF THE PACIFIC SEALERS.

By HAROLD BINDLOSS.

It happened a few years ago that the three Powers ruling over the frozen shores of the polar sea were engaged in a keen dispute as to the right of their respective subjects to kill the seal in the mist-shrouded waters of the North. British, Russian, and American diplomacy was hard at work, and meantime ugly rumours flew up and down the coast, from Alaska to Puget Sound. Boats, it was said, had been ruthlessly fired upon by Russian cruisers, schooners wrongfully seized, and—so the whispers ran—crews had been sent inland and lost in the silence of Siberia. Probably the rumours were not all true; but there are schooners missing to this day, and vessels actually sailed from Portland and Astoria armed with quick-firing guns.

A group of ragged men, who claimed the rights and privileges of British subjects, were seated above the weed-grown ledges of a certain harbour on the dreary Kamtchatkan coast towards the close of one lowering day. Behind them rose a wilderness of rocky hills, their summits veiled in mist, and sombre pine-woods about their feet; before them the lonely waters of the Pacific rolled eastwards until the long undulations were lost in trails of clammy mist. And this is the general aspect of the shores of the North from Lawrence Island round by the Aleutians to Cape Lopatka—forbidding gray headlands, neutral-tinted sea, a sky of steely-blue, and belts of eternal haze. The writer speaks advisedly, for he has been there.

The men were typical of their class—gaunt, hard-featured seafarers, who lived a rough and dangerous life, and feared no man on all the breadth of the ocean. The sealers are an ill folk to meddle with, and there are curious stories told of their doings from Mackenzie mouth to Japan. Now and then they fight vigorously for their rights, or what they consider their rights to be, with stretcher and handspike, and sometimes, it is said, with the big sealing-rifle too.

They were a tattered, disreputable crew, with a curious hollowness in their cheeks and an angularity of frame; for a Russian prison is not a healthy place to dwell in, nor is black bread of rye and bark a nourishing diet. One, however, betrayed himself in speech and gesture as an Englishman used to a different life. How Harry Ormond came to cast in his lot with these free-lances of the sea was his own affair; but unfortunately for himself he was there.

The oldest of the party leaned his head upon his hands and stared hard at a rickety, worm-

eaten schooner lazily dipping her bows into the gray-backed swells. She had been confiscated by the Russians many years before for illegal sealing, and was now too old for anything but a brief fishing-trip. There was a certain resolute look about the hard mouth and keen eyes of this man, as of one accustomed to carry his life in his hands and earn his bread in peril of grinding ice-pack and nameless reef.

'What are you glaring at by the hour together, Steve Marshall?' said Ephraim Fuller, one time mate of the sealing-schooner *Cedar-branch*, whose Japanese bride had long ago consoled herself for his disappearance with a Yankee whaler; and his comrade answered:

'I was thinkin' of all we've gone through since the Russians seized us off the Vitchka beach. Where's our schooner now? And what are they doin' at Ottawa to leave us rottin' here?'

'It's curious,' broke in the Englishman, 'that the Russians should let us breathe free air at last. Why do they do it now? I wonder if that story of the Chatkadaler fishermen is true—sealers marched inland.'

'They'll never take me there alive,' said Fuller the mate, 'and my hide don't value much. You're skipper yet, Steve Marshall. Is there nothing we can do; an' you with a wife in Westminster town?'

A low growl of approval went up, and the captain turned his steady gaze upon the speaker. Steve Marshall was not a man of many words, but what he said was generally to the point. So he answered slowly: 'Give me time. I was thinkin', too, that if we could get off some dark night, that old bucket of an *Olga* might make shift to take us home—an' the sooner the better. Who knows what may happen next?'

Then a bugle-call rang out from beyond the clustering roofs of the wooden town, and the boom of a gun answered, for the watery sun had set. A Russian soldier strode out of the gathering mist above, and, leaning on his rifle, beckoned with his hand; and they followed without a word.

That night there was much earnest consultation in the fetid log-house prison, until at last Fuller the mate said: 'It's curious they're not half so careful of us now. Perhaps it's a trap for us to break out and get shot, so the less noise the better, Steve; there may be a sentry there.'

'The worse for that sentry, then,' answered Marshall, swinging a massy pinewood stool aloft to the full swoop of his powerful arms. Down it came with a whirr and a crash; the barred door shivered, and a little chilly air blew in upon them.

'All together; shove,' said the mate.

There was a splintering of timber as the door fell back, the night wind swept their faces, and they were free.

'Now,' said Marshall, 'there are two things to be done. One is to rustle for the beach, and the other is to bring the Siwash' (British Columbia coast Indians) 'sealers out. Who'll slip down to the other log-house? I don't sail without them.'

Then there was discussion and dissension. Some said it was madness to risk the safety of all for the alien dory-hands, and others agreed with the skipper that the Siwash should have a chance.

'We signed on each man his share in the skins, each man his share in the risk,' said Marshall gravely. 'They did their part, and I do mine; they sail with us, or I raise the town.'

'I'll go,' answered the mate. 'We'll be on the beach in an hour; if not, we'll never come. You can sail without us then.'

A little fitful moonlight shone down for a time upon the shingled roofs as the men crept cautiously towards the inlet, then the fog rolled down in chilly wreaths, and the fierce baying of a hound rose up above the moaning of the sea.

They cursed the dog beneath their breath, pressing on the faster, and at last stood upon the weed-grown ledges, with the long swell lifting the sea-rack at their feet. The fog was sliding past in woolly wisps; but through the whiteness something loomed out shadowy and indistinct, and there was a sound as of the tide racing past the bows of a rolling vessel.

'There she is,' said Marshall; 'they'd hear us a mile away draggin' a boat over the shingle at the landin'. Two men must swim, and bring the dory off. I'm one.'

'I'm the other,' spoke up Ormond; and some one said, 'Well done for the old country.'

The two men shed most of their garments upon the weed, and waded cautiously down the shelf. A brimming swell rolled in out of the night, lapped about them from knee to breast, cold as death with the chill of the Arctic ice; and Ormond felt something strike through him like a knife. Then there was a shout in his ear, 'Head up-tide all you're worth;' and he launched out with the streaky backwash. For a time he could see nothing but a clammy curtain of mist; then his eyes caught the dull shimmer of the dripping hull, and a voice said, 'Up-tide; it's runnin' like a sluice-head.'

The schooner lay close at hand, but their limbs were stiffened by confinement, and the yards seemed miles as they fought the icy stream together side by side. At last the wallowing hull was close ahead, and Marshall gasped, 'Grab the channels when she rolls down.'

Ormond slid beneath the bowsprit; the wet side swayed towards them as the dark sea sucked it down, and the longed-for hand-hold swept past, a foot above their grasp. Clutching at the slimy pinewood he drove along the bends, and a spluttering voice behind him said, 'Thank the Lord, there's a dory astern; it's our only chance.'

A moment later the two men grasped the trailing painter, and with pain and difficulty dragged themselves in over the bows. Next they cast the dory loose, and a murmur of applause and welcome went up as they came shorewards across the tide.

'Take the oars. We have done our part,' said Marshall when the keel ground upon the stone. The men tumbled in, a swell poured deep across the gunwale, then the dory shot out into the mist as fast as the bending blades could drive her through the water, and ran crashing alongside the schooner. Gaskets were cast loose, and the big, mildewed fore-and-afters fluttered noisily aloft, shaking down a drenching shower upon the men below. Afterwards the skipper stood beside the wheel, staring into the fog, and Ormond paced fiercely to and fro to warm his

frozen limbs, longing as he had never longed before for the sound of footsteps on the beach. But there was nothing to break the stillness save the canvas slapping overhead in the land-breeze, the nervous whispers of the crew, and the moaning of the swell upon the weedy reefs.

'The hour's long past. Will they never come?' said Marshall, and the men stirred uneasily as they strained both eyes and ears. At last a faint hail came down the wind, two hands leapt into the dory, and she slid away towards the inner harbour.

'They might hear the thudding of the oars half-way across the town,' said Ormond huskily; and the skipper answered, 'They've probably been heard already, but that don't count if once we've the luck to take her out.'

Then the boat came back, loaded to the covering-strake, with the water foaming about her bows. A dozen brown-skinned Siwash leapt on board, and some one said, 'There's no time to man the levers; half the place is coming down.'

Fuller the mate swung a hammer twice; there was a sharp metallic clang as he drove out the shackle-pin and a grinding roar of chain running out. Then the headsails rattled up the stays, and as Marshall wrenched over the spokes, the schooner swung round upon her heel, with her bows towards the ocean. Two dark figures were clinging to the cross-trees overhead; the thundering folds of the huge gaff-topsail hardened into iron curves; and with the brine hissing around her stem, the *Olga* drove out goose-winged to sea.

'The Lord send us clear of the reefs this night,' said Fuller the mate; and the skipper answered grimly, 'Reef, an' shelf, an' barrier, an' we're blundering through them all—straight away to sea.'

Two men were crouching upon the forecandle-head, straining their eyes to pierce the whiteness; and presently there came a warning cry, 'Breakers ahead—starboard for your life!'

'Starboard it is; stand by the guys,' was the answer from the helm, and the rotten boom-foresail jibbed over with a bang that rent it from throat to clew. Then, as the fluttering cloths blew out to lee, the schooner stopped dead with a shivering crash, and there was a sluicing of water along the deck.

'The shingle-barrier,' cried the mate; 'perhaps she'll drive across.'

Twice the vessel quivered and groaned, grinding her keel among the pebbles. Then a long-backed swell rolled in, swayed her sluggishly aloft, and as she shot out into the night, leaving the last of the Russian ground behind, more than one ragged sealer shook his clenched fist in the direction of the invisible town with words which it is not lawful to use.

'Start the pumps, Fuller,' said the skipper; 'after that the old wreck will be leaking like a sieve. Get below, you Siwash, and make a fire. You can settle the watch among yourselves.'

When day came and the *Olga* rolled southwards alone upon a narrow, mist-walled circle of streaky sea, they found the skipper's words were true—the ancient vessel leaked like a sieve, and a wide-meshed one at that. Furthermore, there were scarcely a week's poor rations on board, and

countless leagues of ocean lay between them and the sunny Straits of San Juan.

But Steve Marshall was in nowise dismayed. 'We must risk the cruiser—she can't steam eight knots—and run down the coast,' he said. 'There are villages to the southwards, and food I'm bound to have.'

Three days later they sighted a hamlet lying behind a long, surf-fringed point, and Marshall glanced dubiously at the entrance. 'Too much sea to work the boats here,' he said; 'but that inlet would be a very tight place to get out of in a hurry with the wind dead in. All the same we're bound to chance it;' and they ran the *Olga* in.

A few of the simple fisher-folks came off on board, for the 'Chatadalers' have dealings with the sealers at times. Then they gazed significantly at one another as they noted a certain mark branded into the heel of the mast and along the rail, and would have gone ashore. They knew there is no escape from the wrath of the Tzar, and that the claws of the Russian eagle strike far over land and sea. But the skipper stood quietly between them and the gangway, a weapon in his hand, and he conquered in the end. By fair means or foul, food he would have; and in a curious mixture of languages a bargain was struck. Boats, loaded with every coil of gear they could spare, pulled ashore, and came back with such delicacies as black bread, dried fish, and seal-oil; and the men sang at the oars as they drove them cheerfully into the teeth of the chilly swell. Hope was rising in their hearts again. Then, towards the close of the short Northern day, a trail of smoke crept out of the misty horizon, and the skipper ground his teeth.

'We're a mile from the heads—wind an' sea dead in, an' no room to beat,' he said. 'This craft can sail, old as she is; you've got to tow her clear of the point before that fellow's there. It's a Russian cruiser's hold or the open sea to-night.'

The men ashore had also seen the smoke, and read its meaning plainly. The last dory came flying alongside, cables were made fast, their last anchor slipped, and, at the cry of the mate, 'All together, walk her out; they'll never see the way she went,' the men settled down in grim earnest to their work. Ormond was pulling No. 2 in the whaleboat, the bending oars ripping through the water about him, and the gray sea lapping noisily against the landings of the clinker dory ahead. At times the schooner came shooting towards them with the towlines splashing slackly in the transparent brine; then she dropped astern, and the cables twanged and tautened into the likeness of iron bars, as though they were made fast to an immovable rock.

In ten minutes Ormond's throat was parched and the roof of his mouth dried up; but, setting his teeth hard, he bent over his oar until the stout loom creaked within his hand. Once the schooner slid forward almost on top of them, and for a moment it seemed as if the iron-headed martingale beneath her bowsprit would sweep some of the panting crew out of existence when her head came down. But the boat forged ahead in time, and they heard the hoarse voice of the mate: 'Give her fits—everlastin' fits. Stretch out, bullies; the mist's comin' down.'

Presently they reached more open water, and here the work grew harder still. The long swell hove the boat almost on end, smote the bows of the *Olga*, and checked her way in spite of their efforts. Ormond could hear the short, gasping breath of the men about him, and the smothered curses of him who pulled the stroke-oar; then from the lighter dory ahead there rose the half-choked refrain of some wild Siwash chant, and the oars seemed to swing a little less like bars of lead.

'There's a trickle of tide with us now. Keep it up—oh, keep it up!' roared Fuller the mate, flinging his arms about upon the *Olga's* forecandle, and the whaler scooped a hundredweight of water in over her bows as they drove her through a sea. Ormond glanced forward over his shoulder, and saw two slender spars swinging to and fro at a wide angle as the cruiser crept up along the land, a trail of dingy smoke streaming seawards, streaked with red flame about the tip of the reeling funnel. But he also saw the merciful fog rolling up in sheltering wreaths.

On they went, wrenching upon the oars in grim silence now. Then there was a rattle of halliards, and the voice of Skipper Marshall fell upon their ears: 'Ten minutes more and you're clear. Pull for your lives.'

The thunder of the surf on the heads drowned the rattle and thud of the oars, when the welcome hail rose faintly above the song of the reef, 'Well done; alongside with you all;' and the two boats drove grinding against the schooner's bends.

'Cast them adrift. Up foresail and jibs,' roared the mate; and Ormond leapt on deck. The big mainsail and gaff-topsail were slashing to and fro; a group of men were hauling for dear life about the heel of the foremast; and presently, with a great rattling and slatting, the headsails went aloft. Then there was time to glance round, and as he dashed the perspiration from his forehead Ormond stared with all his eyes. The sea-fog was closing like a wall about the mouth of the inlet, though it was thinner than it would be by-and-by, and through the drifting haze he could see the spars of the cruiser rolling towards the deeper water on the northern side.

Meanwhile the wheel was held a-weather and the *Olga* gathering way. 'That,' said Marshall coolly, 'is the fellow we showed our heels to in the *Flora* twice, and this schooner can do it too. It's two boards to the entrance, an' a fair wind outside. We're no mark for a gun in the haze. Another drag on the mainsheet, Fuller.'

So, hurling the brine in stinging showers across her forecandle-head as she shouldered aside the long roll of the Pacific, the *Olga* drove forward into the gathering mist, straight for the shore, towards which the half-visible cruiser was heading fast.

Then a hoarse hail came down the wind, and they saw the shadowy bulk of the Russian lie wallowing right across their course as she steamed in to cut the schooner off.

'So far so good,' said Marshall very deliberately; 'there's more wind outside. Let her come round, and we'll see if he'll follow us through the surf.'

The helm was put a-lee, there was a great rattling of headsails, the fore-and-afters went over, and the *Olga*, gathering way on the other

tack, shot across in the direction of the spouting surf which swept the opposite point. Again a shout came out of the whiteness, followed by the clang of an engine-room gong and the clatter of reversed engines, and the steamer faded out of sight.

Marshall laughed softly as he clutched the jarring wheel. 'That Russian never thought we'd chance the surf on the reef,' he said. 'Guess they're lowering boats to seize the wreck, or searchin' for us up the inlet, now.'

The mist came down thicker than ever, and presently the swell hove itself on end about the schooner in steep-sided, white-topped ridges, which burst in clouds of spray over the fore-castle-head and sluiced the sloping deck.

'It's touch-an'-go,' said Fuller the mate; 'there's the cruiser yonder if we go about, and how near the reef is to lee Heaven knows—a trifle closer, Steve.'

'Haul lee sheets,' said the skipper shortly, putting down the helm half-a-spoke; and for a space the men scarcely dared to breathe as the schooner wallowed and plunged through a white waste of curling sea. Presently the rollers grew smoother a little, the lurches easier, and at last the *Olga* swept swiftly southwards across the regular, deep-sea heave, the foam boiling about her bows, and the streaky crests of the undulations curled by the driving breeze rising in parallel ridges above her high-lifted weather rail.

Then the dull boom of a gun rang out across the point they had left behind, and Steve Marshall, easing his stiffened grasp upon the wheel, cried aloud, 'Outwitted an' outsailed—cuchred, by the powers!'

The story of the rest of that voyage would take too long to tell. The *Olga* fell in with other schooners going north, whose skippers supplied her with provisions, or this story would never have been written. In due time she left the chill gray seas behind, and came out upon the white-flecked, turquoise-tinted waters of the Pacific south of the Skeena river, where the sea was bright with golden sunshine and the heavens one vault of azure above. Then they swept along, wing and wing, before a norther, down the west coast of British Columbia, where glacier-crested ranges, snowy peaks, and nameless valleys filled with primeval forest opened up and slid away astern as the *Olga* cleft the blue swell in her hurry south.

And all the time the pumps clanged night and day; there was much weary labour and but little sleep, for the venerable ruin leaked like a large colander now. At last, one morning, a glad shout went up as the mighty Olympians rose to view, a white shimmer of snow far aloft in the crystalline azure, and apparently cut off from all connection with the earth below.

A week later the *Olga* sailed safely into the harbour of Victoria, B.C., that sunniest city of a beautiful land, and her crew were received like those risen from the dead. The writer was afterwards told that the schooner originally seized from Marshall was, through diplomatic efforts, sent back from Vladivostock; and the former owners of the rickety vessel rechristened *Olga* commenced a curious action to recover her from the salvors. Ormond, however, never quite knew how it was settled. He returned to a

different life, though he still looks back, and sometimes with a vague regret, to the days he dwelt among a strange and fearless people—when he sailed with the free-lances of the Northern seas.

REGIMENTAL BANDS.

It may safely be asserted that a regiment deprived of its band would lose much of that attractiveness in the public estimation which music confers in a degree hardly less than the scarlet coat itself. From the earliest times the sound of music has inspired the warrior in the fight—the war-song of the bards gradually giving place to the 'sonorous metal blowing martial sounds.' The horn and its varieties did duty at the battle of Hastings; while the trumpet, the fruitful parent of so many other wind-instruments, has been well known from the earliest period of human history. An example of the straight trumpet occurs on the monumental brass of Sir Roger de Trumpington, dating from about the year 1290, erected in the Cambridgeshire village of that name. Cornage tenure was once a familiar way of holding land, particularly on the Scottish Borders, conditionally on the tenants' blowing a horn in case of danger from invasion. The barony of Burgh-on-the-Sands, in Cumberland, was anciently so held. Froissart tells us that the Scots, with a view to frighten the soldiers of Edward III., 'made marvellous great fires, and about midnight such a blasting and noise with their horns, that it seemed as if all the great devils from hell had been come there.' And again, the same chronicler in 1338 records how the bass, the treble, and the tenor commingled their horrors to intimidate the Bishop of Durham and his army. It was by means of the shrill trump that orders to the army were usually conveyed.

More important still in its effects on hosts of men is the sound of the spirit-stirring drum. Probably introduced from the East, it is frequently mentioned in the accounts of the first Crusade. When Edward III. and his queen made their triumphal entry into Calais, 'tambours' or drums were among the instruments which were played in their honour. Another of these was called a 'naker' or kettledrum, taken, together with its name, from the Arabs. The poet Chaucer also mentions this instrument in his description of the tournament in the 'Knights Tale':

Fyfes, trompes, nakeres, and clariounes,
That in the bataille blowne bloody sounes.

The king generally kept a troupe of these bandmen or minstrels in his employ; and we read that Edward II. on one occasion gave a sum of sixty shillings to Roger the Trumpeter, Janino the Nakerer, and others for their performances. Another minstrel was called the

'Cheveretter,' or player on the bagpipe. King Henry V. had a band which discoursed sweet music during his expedition to Harfleur, each member being recompensed for his services with the sum of twelvepence per diem. When the citizens of London were mustered in the thirty-first year of Henry VIII., we hear that 'before every standard was appointed one dromslade at the least.' Each company of one hundred men at this time possessed a couple of drummers. Kettledrums, as used by cavalry, appear to have been a comparative novelty in 1685, when Sir James Turner wrote: 'There is another martial instrument, used with cavalry, which they call the kettledrum; there be two of them which hang before the drummer's saddle, on both of which he beats.'

The dignitary known as drum-major was not generally recognised in the English army till the close of the reign of Charles I. Corporal punishment up to the time of William III. was executed by the provost-marshal and his deputies; but afterwards the drummer was entrusted with the task. Among the records of the Coldstream Guards is an order that 'the drum-major be answerable that no cat has more than nine tails.' In 1661 a drum-major of the Parliamentary army received one shilling and sixpence per diem.

It is said by some that we owe the fife—'ear-piercing,' as Shakespeare calls it—to the Swiss; and Sir James Turner, who busied himself in writing on military matters, names it the 'Allemaigne whistle.' In France it was employed at least as early as 1534, in which year it was ordered by Francis I. that each band of one thousand men was to have four drums and two fifes. A few years later, in our own country, we find 'drommes and flyffes' included in the muster of London citizens. Shakespeare refers to the musician, not the instrument, when he speaks in the *Merchant of Venice* of 'the vile squealing of the wry-necked fife.' An old writer observes, indeed, that a 'fyfe is a wry-neckt musician, for he looks away from his instrument.' About the reign of James II. the fife lost its popularity for a time, Sir James Turner observing: 'With us, any captain may keep a fifer in his company and maintain him, too, for no pay is allowed him—perhaps just as much as he deserveth.'

These instruments were restored to the army in the middle of the eighteenth century by the Duke of Cumberland, the regiment which was the first to use them on their reintroduction being the Royal Artillery. The then colonel, it appears, had brought a certain Hanoverian fifer, named John Ulrich, over from Hanover when the allied army separated, and he was the means of instructing the young idea in the art of playing that instrument. Fifers do not appear in the pay-list of the Coldstream Guards till the year 1797, when two of these musicians are charged for in the company of Grenadiers. After the Restoration the hautboy or oboe

appears among the other instruments of the band.

Probably the first regimental band, as we now understand it, was that established in 1787 by the Artillery, the bandmaster of which received four shillings a day; and the eight privates employed as musicians were borne on the strength of the companies at Woolwich. As to the composition of a militia band, a few years later on, we have full information contained in a letter written by an innkeeper of Lavenham, in Suffolk, who says: 'We have had four companies of the West Middlesex Militia quartered upon us for three days, consisting of three officers and forty-nine men, who had the best band I ever heard. 'Tis worth mentioning to those who are lovers of superior music. It consisted of five clarionets, two French horns, one bugle-horn, one trumpet, two bassoons, one bass drum, two triangles—the latter played by boys about nine years old—two tambourines—the performers mulattos—and the claspans by a real blackamoor, a very active man, who walked between the two mulattos, which had a very grand appearance indeed.'

In military music the march occupies a prominent position, and has been employed not only to stimulate courage, but also, from about the middle of the seventeenth century, to ensure the orderly advance of troops. One of the earliest instances of a rhythmical march is the Welsh war-strain, 'The March of the Men of Harlech,' which is supposed to have originated during the siege of Harlech Castle in 1468. In England the military march was of somewhat later development. Sir John Hawkins in his *History of Music* tells us that its characteristic was dignity and gravity, in which respect it differed greatly from the French, which was brisk and alert. And apropos of this subject, the same author quotes a witty reply of an Elizabethan soldier to the French Marshal Biron's remark that 'the English march, being beaten by the drum, was slow, heavy, and sluggish.' 'That may be true,' he said; 'but slow as it is, it has traversed your master's country from one end to the other.'

Outside military circles very little is known about the bands of the British army or of their history. Still less, perhaps, can be gathered concerning the airs which have become associated with different regiments by tradition. Yet we know the feeling inspired by the stirring strains of the old Elizabethan song, 'The British Grenadiers,' or by the bagpipes when they bring back to the ears of the Highlander 'the stirring memory of a thousand years.' We think of the little drummer at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir who continued beating his drum during the whole time of assault; or of that other twelve-year-old lad of the Antrim regiment in '98 who was being conducted to the town of Gorey with other prisoners, and lost his life for exclaiming, as he leaped on the head of the drum and broke through the parchment, 'that the king's drum should never be beaten for rebels.'

During the Franco-German war, a curiously weird effect was produced on the survivors of the terrible battle of Mars-la-Tour when the order was given to the first trumpeter to sound

the assembly. The trumpet had been shattered by a shot, and produced but a muffled echo of its ordinary sound—an event which was afterwards immortalised in a poem by Ferdinand Freiligrath, entitled *The Trumpet of Gravelotte*.

Some regiments have certain airs which traditionally appertain to them, as, for instance, the quick-step march used by the first battalion of the Royal Scots called 'Dumbarton's Drums.' Its origin can be traced back as far as the year 1655, when Lord George Douglas, afterwards Earl of Dumbarton, was colonel of the regiment then serving under the French king, Louis XIV. About a score of years later, however, it was recalled to England by Charles II., and embodied in the British army. The march of the Rifle Brigade, 'I'm Ninety-five,' owes its origin to the regiment being the Ninety-fifth before being renamed the Rifle Brigade. The march of the Thirty-second Foot, or Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, is called 'One and All,' which is also the motto of the regiment. The air seems to have been composed by a lady residing at Bodmin, and adapted in the first decade of the present century, when the Royal Cornwall Militia volunteered 'to a man' for service in Ireland. The Cheshire Regiment treasures the air 'Wha wadna fecht for Charlie?' in memory of a whilom commander, Sir Charles Napier. The familiar air, 'The Girl I left behind me,' which is played when a regiment is going abroad or quitting its quarters, is supposed to be of Irish origin, and to have become a military tune after the encampment at Brighton in 1759.

One regiment—curiously enough, the Prince of Wales's Own—possesses a march with the revolutionary title of 'Ça Ira.' This famous song, composed for the Fête de la Federation in 1789, to the tune of 'Le Carillon National,' seems to have been used by the colonel of this regiment during a campaign in Flanders, and had such an effect in stimulating the ardour of the young soldiers that they succeeded in driving the French across the river Scheldt. It is said that the French adopted the phrase from Benjamin Franklin, who used to say in reference to the American Revolution: 'Ah! ah! ça ira, ça ira.' This was the air, too, which Marie Antoinette, unconscious of her fate, was constantly playing over on the harpsichord.

The expense of maintaining a British army band falls partly upon the country, partly upon the officers of the various regiments. The Government contributes about eighty pounds a year to the band fund of each regiment; while officers above the rank of subaltern, in addition to a fixed sum on appointment and promotion, each contribute twelve days' pay yearly to the same object. Every band has to find its own reed and brass instruments, the Government allowing only bugles, drums, and fifes for the infantry, and bugles and trumpets for the cavalry and artillery. Bagpipes are provided for the various Highland regiments. It is not customary—though there is a popular idea to the contrary—for the full band to go on active service; and in case of short expeditions and so forth, the drums and pipes alone accompany the regiment. In cases where the campaign is likely to be prolonged, or where the regiment

is going on long service, the members of the band go with it, and assist in ambulance duty. A bandsman's pay is the same as that of a private, amounting to about eightpence a day when the various deductions have been taken into account. The bands of the Guards and other stationary regiments do not go on active service either in the ranks or as bandsmen.

Kneller Hall—the home of the famous painter—near Hounslow, is now the training school for those aspiring to be bandmasters; and promising youths, also, from the bands of different regiments there receive a course of instruction in instrumental music. Boys for the band are recruited from the Duke of York's School, the Hibernian School, Dublin, and other institutions of a like character; often they are the sons of soldiers in the regiment. Among the best bands are those of the Royal Engineers, the Royal Artillery, the Royal Marines, and those belonging to the various regiments of Guards. These are all allowed more men than in the line, and the bandsmen of the Guards have various privileges, such as that of individually accepting private engagements in plain clothes when off duty. The hiring of these bands for various functions and ceremonies is a source of considerable revenue; and especially in London the position of a bandsman would appear to be a very enviable one. The music—which had formerly to be scored and arranged by the bandmaster of the regiment—has now been for many years adapted to the use of bands by various musical journals, the earliest of which was published by Mr Boosey in 1846; and the favourite march or waltz of the day is at present never long in appearing in the programme of military music.

A L M A M A T E R

(EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY).

GRAY MOTHER of three hundred years!

No distance dims your face;

A crowd of memories endears

Your well-remembered place.

The light of morning plays around

The northern city gray;

It lingers where our eyes have found

A glory passed away.

Far scattered to the ends of earth

Who gathered in your halls;

Long hushed in silence now the mirth

That echoed in your walls,

Which we remember. But to you

The world is never old;

There is no silence, no adieu;

Your tale is never told.

Dear Mother, where the sunshine falls

And lights you now as then,

How oft the memory recalls

What ne'er may be again!

R. S. C.

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CHRISTMAS NUMBERS OLD AND NEW.

THACKERAY in one of his *Roundabout Papers* remarks how we have all admired the illustrated papers, and noted how boisterously jolly they become at Christmas-time. He suggests that we ought to feel very grateful to the folks who begin their preparations months before to supply us with pictures of wassail bowls, robin red-breasts, waits, snow landscapes, and bursts of Christmas song; as grateful as we are towards the cook who gets up at midnight and sets the pudding a-boiling for next day's consumption. Those concerned in the production of magazines and illustrated papers still seem to think, like the bakers and confectioners, that the rate of consumption of highly-spiced literary fare is much greater at the Christmas season. Even *Punch* distributes a few more jokes at this time. Now, too, the monthly illustrated magazine swells out to twice its usual size and price; and that and the illustrated weekly both take care to inform us that the literature and pictures are provided by the very best writers and artists of the day. Therefore, all are the best—at least we may count on getting what is in vogue, in both literature and pictures; quite a change from the kind of thing which Thackeray, and Dickens especially, thought suitable for Christmas season.

Although we may not care to admit it, we are indebted to the pen of Washington Irving for conserving in his *Sketch Book* those pictures of old Christmas in England which are already memories of the past. Rural England was never described in a more charming way than by this American writer, who *could* write 'decent English.' When he transmitted No. V. of his *Sketch Book*, containing 'Christmas,' to his brother Ebenezer in America, the latter was so far disappointed at finding less of the story and pathetic element than in previous numbers. The author explained that this had cost him more trouble and more odd research than any of the rest. It was written for peculiar tastes, and for those who were fond of what was quaint in literature and

customs. The scenes there depicted were formed upon humours and customs peculiar to the English, and illustrative of their greatest holiday. For the old rhymes he had been indebted to many curious volumes in the British Museum. Hagley, in Worcestershire, the seat of Lord Lyttelton, was the background for these sketches of old Christmas customs, as related in 'Christmas Eve' and 'Christmas Dinner.' This much we learn from a note in his nephew's biography. At first ascribed to Scott, his most useful and powerful literary friend, these have taken their own place in English literature.

The impulse which Charles Dickens gave to Christmas literature has not yet died out, although it has assumed different forms. At first, disappointed with the monetary returns of the *Christmas Carol*, Dickens had every reason to congratulate himself on the moral result of his sermon against selfishness. 'You should be happy yourself,' wrote Lord Jeffrey, 'for you may be sure you have done more good by this little publication, fostered more kindly feelings, and prompted more positive acts of beneficence than can be traced to all the pulpits and confessionals in Christendom since Christmas 1842.' This is strongly stated, but it is at least a testimony of the universal hold that this contribution to Christmas literature had taken. To Thackeray it seemed a personal kindness to every man and woman who read it. Those who later heard the author read his own production were also powerfully impressed. Fond of old Christmas tales, Dickens felt that in the *Carol*, *Chimes*, and *Cricket on the Hearth* he was giving them a higher form. Disappointed at first in the sale of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, which he thought his strongest book up to the time of writing, he began and finished the *Christmas Carol* in the brief interval of leisure between the writing of two numbers.

Forster tells us that Dickens had been in Manchester in the beginning of October 1843, where he presided at the opening of the Athenæum, and spoke of the education of the very poor. There the fancy occurred to him which is embodied in the

Carol. He told Forster that during its writing he wept and laughed and walked thinking of it 'about the black streets of London many and many a night after all sober folks had gone to bed.' And when it was done he let himself 'loose like a madman.' Published a few days before Christmas 1843, the first edition of 6000 was sold the first day, and another 2000 had gone of the second and third editions by the beginning of 1844. With the prospect of going soon abroad, Dickens had set his heart upon earning £1000 by this venture, and was disappointed when the returns from Chapman & Hall's account only showed a balance in his favour of £726. When the *Chimes* and *Crickets on the Hearth* came to be published they doubled the sale of the *Carol*; but finding the price of five shillings too high for the public to whom he appealed, and the sale too small to remunerate the outlay, at a later date he adopted the cheap paper cover, extra double number form, of *All the Year Round* as the vehicle for these Christmas fancies. The sale of *Doctor Marigold's Prescriptions* for the first week was 250,000. The other extra numbers appear to have done quite as well. Probably Mr Forster was right when he said that these volumes of Dickens carried to countless firesides, with new enjoyment of the season, a better apprehension of its claims and obligations, and mingled grave with glad thoughts, much to the advantage of both.

The illustrated weekly papers did their duty in keeping up the traditional feeling regarding Christmas, which Thackeray, as we have seen, noted in one of his essays. This was especially the case with that pioneer of illustrated weekly journalism, the *Illustrated London News*, founded by Mr Herbert Ingram in 1842. Mr Mason Jackson, in almost a lifetime's retrospect in connection with illustrations, tells us that in 1856 Dr Charles Mackay, the editor and manager of this paper, asked him to get up the illustrations for a Christmas number, and this he continued to do for several years. After he joined the permanent staff of the paper he found the preparation of the Christmas numbers one of his most congenial duties. These always commanded a large sale. Thirty years ago the Christmas number of the *Illustrated London News* consisted of the ordinary weekly issue enlarged to a double number, only half of which was devoted to Christmas. The special extra numbers of to-day were not invented, he tells us, until a later date.

Few people have any conception of the amount of planning, care, time, money, artistic and literary talent necessary to the production of one really good Christmas number. In dealing with Christmas numbers of any artistic merit, such as those of the *Graphic*, it is always necessary to consider the time it will take for its production; consequently the printing is invariably started about twelve months in advance. This was the case with the Christmas number of the *Graphic* for 1880, with which was presented the celebrated picture 'Cherry Ripe' by Millais. Of this number considerably over half-a-million copies were printed, and, notwithstanding the efforts made to meet the demand, the publishers were ultimately compelled to return thousands of pounds to the trade for orders they were unable to execute. This particular number was printed in seventeen colours; each colour was printed separately, and was allowed to dry

before another was added, which necessitated nearly ten million impressions before the work could be completed. The weight of paper used for this issue was 200 tons, and between 300 and 400 persons were more or less constantly engaged in its production. For the purpose of the necessary preliminary advertising, nearly a million handbills, contents sheets, specimen plates, trade notices, &c., were issued, besides framed copies of the principal plates on exhibition at every railway station in the United Kingdom.

The *Windsor Magazine* introduced an innovation in 1895, and presented to its subscribers a reprint of a separate book by Dr Conan Doyle. The popularity of this feature led the proprietors to present with the Christmas number for 1896 another complete story, by Guy Boothby, in addition to 162 pages of the magazine itself. The preparations for the coming Christmas number began in March of this year. The *Strand* and *Pearson's* also largely increased the size of their Christmas issues, and doubled the price.

We need scarcely follow up the subject further, for have not extra Christmas numbers been legion? And the coloured pictures from some of them are to be found framed in cottages over the civilised world. The accompanying literature has also, doubtless, fulfilled its purpose of entertainment, and has been a message of hope and gladness to many a reader.

Mr James Payn, while editor of *Chambers's Journal*, passed eight of these extra numbers through his hands, to six of which he contributed the interesting and amusing introductory framework, and various stories suitable to the occasion. The titles of some of these extra numbers partly explain their contents. A New Year's number for 1864, 'In the Box,' comprised stories supposed to be told by jurymen, who spend the four hours between 5 P.M. and 9 o'clock, while locked in the jury-room and before returning their verdict, in telling stories. This is a fancy worthy of Mr Payn; only we expect most jurymen would have tried to have the verdict of *Not guilty* returned somewhat earlier. 'Tenants at Will' (Christmas 1864), as being reports from the agents of the Society for the Re-establishment of the Character of Haunted Houses, may have interested Mr Stead, the Psychological Society, or the tenant of the haunted house near Dunkeld. Miss Frances Browne, Mr Speight, and Mr J. B. Harwood assisted at this symposium. 'Waiting for the Host' (1865) describes the ingenious manner in which a company entertained one another when the host and hostess were unavoidably detained three hours behind time on a railway journey. Mr Payn, Mr J. B. Harwood, and Miss Frances Browne supplied most of the stories, the editor being responsible for the framework. Mr Leslie Stephen supplied the framework and some of the stories for 'Up and Down Mont Blanc,' the Christmas number of *Chambers's* for 1866. *Under one Roof*; *The Extraordinary*; *Begumbagh* (1869), by George Manville Fenn, since issued in volume form; and *The Winning Hazard* (1870), by Frederick Talbot, complete the list of these Christmas numbers, every one of which had an extensive sale.

It is therefore twenty-seven years since an extra Christmas number of *Chambers's Journal* was issued. This year, however, it is our intention again to issue a special Christmas number of

Chambers's Journal, which will form the December part of the magazine and will be published about the end of November; this part will also contain the title and contents for 1897, as in future we propose completing the volume with the part published on December 1st.

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CHRISTMAS NUMBER
OF
CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL,

BEING DECEMBER PART AND EXTRA XMAS NUMBER.

In addition to numerous articles of general interest, and the usual supply of fiction by other writers, this part will contain complete stories by—

GUY BOOTHBY,

J. ARTHUR BARRY.

W. E. CULE, &c.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XXIX.

PHILIPOF was wrong in supposing that the president of the inner circle had forgotten to take him into consideration. On the contrary, old Karaool had made careful disposition for Sasha's share in the events about to take place. There was, as Philipof had anticipated, a gentleman already in waiting upon the quay outside, whose double duty was to see that Doonya did not escape, and to execute a somewhat delicate commission with regard to Sasha himself. If Philipof appeared to-night he was to accost him, and to give him the cordial invitation of No. 1 to join that branch of the brotherhood of which his friend Smirnof had been a member. There should be honourable work for him. He might even be given a hand in the theatre enterprise, when he would naturally be delighted to find so easy a means of carrying out that which, of course, must be his mind, considering the treatment he had suffered at the hands of authority. If Philipof showed no signs of complying with this invitation, the emissary was very quietly to 'remove' Mr Philipof by the medium of a sharp knife between the shoulder-blades.

Philipof scarcely expected to be spoken to as he left No. 15 shortly after his conversation with Doonya, and stepped out upon the wharf. He had quite intended, however, to find and speak to the spy whom he suspected to be somewhere near, and it saved him the trouble of looking for him when a dark figure emerged from the shadow of a warehouse and a courteous voice hailed him.

'Mr Philipof?' asked the voice.

'The very man,' said Sasha. 'Whom do I address?'

'Katkof, emissary from the circle.'

'To whom?'

'To yourself.'

'But I am not a member of your society.'

'The circle has deputed me to invite you to join.'

'That is very kind of the circle,' said Philipof; 'but why?'

'They have work for you which you will appreciate.'

'And if I decline the honour?'

'Then there is another message.'

'I see,' said Sasha. 'Now, Mr Katkof, I am quite aware that you have in your breast-pocket, or in some other pocket, a knife, or perhaps even a pistol—no, no, don't trouble to show me just now. You see my own pistol is already pointed at your temple—you scarcely observed it in this bad light, did you? Very well; now I say to you, produce that knife, or that pistol, and drop it into my hand—quickly, please—so. Have you another? No? Are you sure? Very well; now follow me.'

Philipof turned the corner of the grain warehouse in whose shadow Katkof had lurked, took a key from his pocket, and unlocked the big door. Then he pushed the astonished and alarmed Katkof into the wheat-strewn interior of the granary. 'There,' he said; 'good-night. I shall recommend you to remain here in absolute silence, for the night-watchman is instructed to keep a special look-out for grain-thieves, and has a duplicate key. He is to shoot the next thief he finds, by special request of the police, who are anxious to provide a warning to these miscreants. Good-night, my dear Mr Katkof, again; I shall hope to see you in the morning.'

Then Philipof returned for a moment to the lighter, and whispered down the companion. 'Doonya,' he said, 'look here!' Doonya appeared, frightened and startled to see Sasha returned. 'Look, Doonya!—the first spoils of war!' he said, and handed down Katkof's knife—a terrible-looking blade. 'Its owner is in warehouse No. 84, half-dead with fright. Keep this by you in case of accidents. To-morrow morning I shall drop in while the doctor is with you. You may expect me without fail. Things are going splendidly so far! Good-night, my Doonya!'

Philipof returned early in the morning. There was a lighter lying ready loaded, which must be despatched as soon as possible after daylight. Philipof boarded the craft at half-past five and aroused Gregory, the skipper. 'Gregory,' he said, 'I have a passenger for you. He is not very anxious to go, but—you understand—he is going. He can lie on the wheat in the hold. Don't mind if he is a bit angry and says cross things. Don't let him out till you get back here. Pop him in the cabin while you discharge your goods, and batten him down. If he is noisy you can do as you please—whip him, if you like. He is a grain-thief; I have caught him in the warehouse.'

This last explanation was quite enough for Gregory. A grain-thief was in his eyes the greatest offender under the sun; and when Philipof brought out the wretched Katkof and stowed him away in Gregory's hold, he was very certain that Katkof would be well taken care of by the irate skipper, and that, if he attempted to escape or make a noise, there would be some head-banging done by Gregory, who, like all those employed upon the grain wharf at St Petersburg, was an immensely powerful man.

So Philipof brought his prisoner on board, having first solemnly warned him, and bade him consider himself under the orders of Gregory, the skipper, until further notice. Katkof was chilled to the bone and thoroughly cowed by his night in the warehouse, where the rats had frightened him nearly out of his wits, and obeyed his new captain without a murmur. Gregory ordered him into the hold, and swore many Russian oaths to the effect that if his head once appeared above the level of the deck, that instant it would be caved in with a hand-spike or something equally hard and unpleasant. Then Gregory and his barge and his prisoner departed on their journey to Cronstadt; and if there was a bewildered man upon this planet that morning, it was Katkof when he began to reflect at his leisure upon the sudden and totally unexpected change in his fortune and prospects.

Philipof was busy among his lighters, but he observed Kirilof arrive at about ten o'clock in the morning, and after a cautious look around from the lee of a warehouse, dart across the quay and into the cabin of No. 15.

Sasha gave him five minutes there, and then followed him. Doonya was in tears. Kirilof had already contrived to frighten or bully her into this state, which must be forgiven Doonya because her nerves had been terribly shaken on the previous day, and she was not quite herself. She stopped crying very suddenly, however, when Philipof appeared, and the joy which overspread her face at the sight of her sturdy friend descending the ladder formed the exact counterpart to the look of disgust which passed like a cloud over Kirilof's face when Sasha made his unexpected and unwelcome appearance.

'Ah, Kirilof the doctor!' said Philipof; 'the very man of all others that I desire to see.'

'Sorry I can't return the compliment,' said Kirilof rudely; 'I have serious private business to discuss with this lady.'

'Well, well, it must wait,' said Sasha quite heartily, 'for my own is, I dare say, still more important—to one of us at least—no, no, don't argue until you have heard me out; it is, I assure you, a matter of life and death.'

'Life and death,' repeated the Doctor, flushing and glaucing angrily at Doonya, who, he quickly concluded, must have betrayed the secrets of the brotherhood; which, indeed, was, undoubtedly, the case. 'I don't know what you are referring to: whose life and death?'

'Oh, not Doonya's. Why do you glance at her? There is no question of life and death for her. No, no, my friend; you will be shocked to hear it, but it is your own neck which is in danger.'

Kirilof started to his feet. 'What are you talking about?' he muttered, paling white with sudden terror and fumbling in the pocket of his greatcoat.

Philipof was quite cool. 'Just one moment,' he said quietly. 'Have you a weapon of any kind about you? If so, may I trouble you? My own, you see, is pointed at your brain-pan or thereabouts. Perhaps it would be simpler if you were to raise your hands above your head—so. Thanks. Now, Doonya, see what the good Doctor keeps in his greatcoat-pocket.'

Doonya, very pale, obeyed, and produced a

revolver, which she handed to Philipof, who pocketed it with his left hand.

Kirilof looked only half-alive with terror and amazement.

'Now,' said Philipof, 'we can proceed to business. Do you know, my dear Doctor, that you are in an extremely critical position? Not only you, of course, but the entire community to which you belong! Your secrets have been betrayed.'

Kirilof glanced at Doonya, and muttered a horrible oath between his teeth.

'Ah, don't blame the lady,' continued Sasha pleasantly; 'it was all my fault. I got it out of her. I have such a way with me, you know! Well, I know all about the business—some of your names and addresses—yours, for instance—and all kinds of useful details. His Majesty the Tsar will be entertained to hear of the little affair arranged for next week.'

Kirilof gave a groan and looked for a moment as though he would faint, but recovered.

'You would never dare,' he muttered. 'And besides, you would not obtain access to the Tsar; and if you did he would believe nothing from you. You are a suspect, you must remember. Neither the Tsar nor his police would take a warning from you. You would be seized and tortured, that's all!'

'Nonsense, man,' said Philipof; 'they would at least verify names and addresses. Besides, you forget, my friend; our little Smirnof's Act is in the Tsar's hands by this time; he will be thinking very differently of me.'

'You will die a thousand deaths at our hands before you are allowed to betray us,' said Kirilof. 'You little know what our inner circle can do. This branch of ours is but a twig of the great tree of Nihilism; its ramifications extend over all Russia. Make one step towards betraying us, and you are a dead man—I warn you.'

Philipof snapped his fingers. 'That for your inner circle!' he said. 'Do you know Katkof? Ah! I see you do. I see also that you were surprised to observe me arrive this morning. You were aware, no doubt, of Katkof's mission last night? Well, Katkof has mysteriously disappeared. There is another inner circle, you perceive, working independently of yours. Tomorrow folks will wonder what has become of Kirilof.'

The last-named groaned again. 'You have me in your power, I admit,' he said; 'but I warn you that anything you may do to me will be terribly avenged upon yourself and Doonya here.'

'My dear man, you go too fast,' said Philipof, with undisturbed coolness. 'I do not suggest that evil will befall you; I merely say that folks will wonder what has become of Kirilof. There will, I trust, be nothing to avenge; that will depend upon yourself. But it is no real comfort to a man whose throat is being cut to reflect that some one will avenge him—now is it?'

'What do you want of me?' asked Kirilof savagely.

'Ah, now, that is spoken like a sensible man. It is, you see, a mere matter of business, a plain *quid pro quo*, the principle which is at the root of all business transactions. I make you a present of your neck, you give me an equivalent; and,

what is more, I am sure the transaction will be as delightful to yourself as to me. I assure you that I have no wish to harm you. Now, listen to me, and we will settle this little matter in no time.'

CHAPTER XXX.

'In the first place,' Sasha continued, 'you will not, I am sure, be surprised to learn that Doonya would never for one moment entertain the idea of performing certain dirty work contemplated at the Grand Theatre. It is an insult to have suggested it to her; but we will pass over that for the present. The alternative is, of course, the chloroform bottle, or, to put the matter in another form, a certificate of death from yourself.'

Kirilof started. 'I see,' he said; 'I understand what you want of me. It is impossible.'

'Nothing is impossible to those whose necks are already encircled by the rope,' said Philipof significantly.

'They might insist upon seeing the corpse; in any case there would have to be a burial. It is impossible.'

'I think all this can be arranged. You are a clever practitioner, I am told. Doonya will not object to play the part of corpse for a short while, in case a personal view is insisted upon. You will have to arrange this, for I solemnly assure you it is your own life and death that are in question. As for the burial, how are these affairs usually managed in similar cases?'

'The society does not interfere. The death certificate is provided by its agents, but the funeral is arranged by the friends of the deceased.'

'Capital! Now, Doctor Kirilof, you have a great part to play in this matter, and you will see the necessity of acting with appropriate caution. In the first place, all three of us remove ourselves this evening to Doonya's lodging. Meanwhile your patients will excuse your attendance upon them this morning and afternoon. I cannot bring myself to part with you. The death certificate will be sent by messenger to its destination, and we shall be prepared, during the night, for the personal inspection you seem to expect. When that is over and the delegate from your inner circle friends has departed, satisfied that our poor Doonya is no more, we shall all three be free to depart upon a little cruise I have arranged for—no, don't raise objections; it will be for your own safety. You are a man of sense, and will understand that this is so.'

Apparently Kirilof was not a man of sense, for he fumed and swore and raved and threatened for five full minutes in a manner which would have alarmed Doonya very much if she had not had Philipof's unmoved coolness to support her. At length Kirilof calmed down again, and sat in his place crying weakly.

'Come now,' continued Philipof, 'let me put the matter in a nutshell. Doonya is not going to commit suicide, nor to take part in bloody plots against other persons: point 1. Therefore a certificate of her death is required—which you are to provide: point 2. The society is to be satisfied of her death: point 3. We escape on board an English steamer, but not before I have acquainted the authorities with all details of the attempt to be made at the

theatre, as well as of the existence of the brotherhood and the names of the members. Your conduct in aiding me to expose this plot shall be favourably mentioned, and if you return to this city after your trip, you will return as the protected of the authorities, and you will have no one left to fear. You will say that I am unnecessarily officious in exposing this society. I reply that they are the cold-blooded murderers of women and innocent persons, and that I war against them as I would stamp out a wasp's nest. I have not much reason to side with authority, as it happens; but I am no conspirator and wish the Tsar no evil. Now for the alternative to my proposal. You and I drive at once, with Doonya, to the chancellery of the Third Section. There we deposit Doonya for safety, and there I deliver up yourself into the tender mercies of those who will know how to induce you to tell them a great many things they will be interested to learn. I shall state the whole truth of this affair as far as I know it. I am not sure that I ought not to take this course at once; it would, I believe, be the right thing to do. Indeed, I'—

'No,' interrupted Kirilof, whose face was the colour of milk, and whose limbs had begun to shake like leaves as Philipof uttered his last sentence; 'no—anything but that! I believe your plan is frightfully dangerous, but of the two it is the better one; it shall be as you propose.'

'There speaks the man of sense,' said Sasha encouragingly. 'Kirilof is on our side, Doonya; congratulate him!'

As a matter of fact, Sasha was well aware of the danger and difficulties of the plan he was about to put into execution; but the alternative of going straight to the police was, he knew, even more perilous, since the police were at this moment in search of Doonya, and would not be inclined to place much credence in her sudden defection from the revolutionary society of which she was now known to be a member. As for Sasha's own character at the police department, it was not, as we know, of the highest; and his championing of Doonya's cause would not be likely to strengthen, but rather to damage, that cause in the eyes of the authorities. Therefore Philipof greatly preferred to arrange for Doonya's safety in his own way, and without the assistance of the police; and he was proportionately glad when Kirilof, by agreeing to adopt his plan, relieved him of the necessity of taking the more dangerous alternative.

'And now, my good Doctor, we will leave Doonya to her reflections,' continued Sasha. 'You are my guest for the rest of the day; and at eight in the evening Doonya will meet us at her lodging. Farewell, Doonya, for the present! Be punctual, my dear; for you must be dead and buried before the morning!'—with which grim joke Philipof took his departure, followed by Kirilof, who was still too sore and angry to pay Doonya the compliment of saluting her.

'I see you are still angry—very unwisely angry,' said Sasha as the two men walked away down the quay, 'for you will be well quit of this detestable society, believe me, Kirilof; and you will bless me one day for delivering you from its meshes. You would be bound to come to a bad end, you know.'

'I wish I could see anything but a bad end to

this cursed business!' said Kirilof. 'It seems to me you are playing the part of a madman; I know no one who has crossed the will of our inner circle and lived!'

'Pooh, pooh! We shall be the first to overcome that fearful body, then. Now, there is just one thing, Kirilof. You see—at least you may see if you look—I continue to hold my revolver in my hand, and my hand in my greatcoat-pocket. I can shoot without withdrawing the weapon, through the cloth, and I am a very good shot. Don't try to escape, my man, or to play the fool; it would spoil our plans, as well as suddenly end your career, both of which would be a pity.'

Kirilof only scowled. As a matter of fact, however, he had no intention of attempting to escape, for he was quite persuaded that, of the two evils before him—namely, the police and Philipof's plan—the latter was undoubtedly the lesser. Moreover, on thinking the matter over, the Doctor had become aware that he would be extremely glad, as Philipof had suggested, to be rid of the brotherhood and safely out of its meshes, if this could be effected. He had drifted, like many others, into his present position, and had little real sympathy with the extremists and terrorists. In a word, the more he contemplated Philipof's plan the more anxious he became to carry it, for his own sake, to a successful issue; and Sasha had the happiness of feeling assured before long that there was nothing to fear from Kirilof, who had unexpectedly become, or was quickly becoming, a zealous convert to his views.

Nevertheless Philipof did not allow his new ally out of his sight during the whole of that day. When evening came, and Doonya had safely reached her lodging, under cover of darkness, and was there duly met by Sasha and Kirilof, the death-certificate was made out and despatched, under sealed envelope, to the president, together with a note from Kirilof requesting to know whether it would be necessary to hold an inspection of the body, and if so, at what time.

It was an anxious interval while the messenger was absent, and the three conspirators awaited the answer to Kirilof's missive. If it should be the will of the chief to view the body, Kirilof knew what he would do, and to his plan both Sasha and Doonya were obliged to agree, because it would be difficult to substitute a better: Doonya would have to be drugged into a death-like condition of unconsciousness. Since this would be a dangerous process, and since awkward hitches might so easily turn the attempt into utter failure, all three of those concerned ardently hoped that the chief would be satisfied with the certificate and would not insist upon a personal visit.

Fortunately for all parties, the confidence of old Karaool in his Mercury was unbounded. He did not in the slightest degree suspect his good faith, nor did it for a moment suggest itself to him that Doonya was other than dead and done with, as per certificate. He therefore sent a reply to the effect that he was satisfied, and that Kirilof had better not go near the lodging of 'the suicide' again, because the police would be sure to be on the spot before long.

This message gave Philipof an idea. 'Why shouldn't they suppose that the police have got you, Kirilof?' he asked. 'That would save

you the trouble of keeping out of the way of the society's bloodhounds until such time as we can leave the country.'

Kirilof approved of the idea, and a note was written to Karaool by Philipof, whose writing was unknown to him, acquainting him with the news that Kirilof had been captured, and Katkof the spy also. The letter was unsigned, and purported to come from 'One who knew.'

Afterwards, at dead of night, Doonya returned to No. 15 barge, and pitched her tent once more in the tiny cabin of that gallant vessel, to the joy of Ivan and his wife, upon whom was impressed the fact that, if they had been careful before, they were to be a hundredfold more careful now, lest her presence should be discovered.

Kirilof was given sanctuary upon another lighter about to start for Cronstadt. There was now no danger to be anticipated from defection on his part, for he had hopelessly committed himself by deceiving the chief, and this offence would certainly never be forgiven. If he returned into the society he would undoubtedly be presented with a green ticket. Taking one consideration with another, there was nothing to fear from Kirilof; and Sasha despatched him and his lighter to Cronstadt upon the usual fortnight's trip without a pang of anxiety.

As for himself, Philipof had work to do in town, and did not accompany his confederates to Cronstadt. His scheme for escape to England or elsewhere was maturing in his mind; but until after the date of the gala performance at the Grand Theatre he was determined to make no move. Doonya and Kirilof were both safe. For himself he was not afraid; he was as capable of looking after his own skin as most men. There was still nearly a week before the day appointed by the terrorists. During that week he must find occasion to do that which he knew must somehow be done, and done by him; for if he did not warn the Tsar of the danger impending, who else either could or would do so?

TEACHING A FINE ART.

By Rev. E. J. HARDY, M.A.,

Author of *How to be Happy though Married, &c.*

WHEN Franklin made his discovery of the identity of lightning and electricity people asked, 'Of what use is it?' The philosopher's retort was: 'What is the use of a child? It may become a man!' It may become a man or a woman capable of any amount of goodness and service—this is a consideration that should make us reverence every child. Who can tell the possibilities that are buttoned up under that boy's jacket or that girl's pinafore? When Trebonius, the schoolmaster of Luther, came into his schoolroom he used to take off his hat and say: 'I uncover to the future senators, counsellors, wise teachers, and other great men that may come forth from this school.' So, too, General Garfield, a great and good President of the United States, frequently remarked that he never passed a ragged boy in the street without feeling that one day he might owe him a salute.

If a child be thus valuable, surely the work of him or her who trains him up in the way he should go ought to be very highly esteemed. It

is difficult, and sometimes impossible, to influence for good and improve the characters of adults, but almost anything may be made of a child. The twig will grow as it is bent. If, then, we set a proper value on those who contribute to the prosperity of the State, we ought to place in the first rank those who teach children, whose labours influence posterity, and on whose precepts and exertions the welfare of our country in a great measure depends. 'He who opens a school,' says Victor Hugo, 'closes a prison.' If 'she who rocks the cradle rules the world,' so does she who moulds the future years of the life of the rising generation. Wise teachers are the spiritual fathers and mothers of the human race. The Jewish Rabbis had so profound a sense of the dignity of instruction that they tell how once, when all the greatest priests and Pharisees had vainly prayed for rain in the time of drought, at last one man arose, who was humble and poorly dressed, and no sooner had he prayed than the heavens became black with clouds and the rain fell. 'Who art thou,' they asked, 'whom God has thus answered?' 'I am a teacher of little children.'

Certainly the popular appreciation of the teacher's calling is not what it ought to be. When we reflect that that calling is one than which there is none higher or holier, we cannot but feel indignant at the way vulgar rich people sometimes treat the tutors or the governesses of their children. Speaking of the education of girls, Mr Ruskin asks: 'Is a girl likely to think her own conduct or her own intellect of much importance when you trust the entire formation of her character, moral and intellectual, to a person whom you (mothers) let your servants treat with less respect than they do your housekeeper (as if the soul of your child were a less charge than jams and groceries), and whom you yourself think you confer an honour upon by letting her sometimes sit in the drawing-room in the evening?'

It must be confessed, however, that one of the reasons why teachers are not more highly esteemed is because so many of them begin to teach without qualification for that most responsible task. 'Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.' Sidney Smith used to say that there were three things which every man thinks that he can do—farm a small farm, drive a gig, and write an article for the *Times*. The witty canon of St Paul's might have added a fourth thing which every man and certainly every woman think that they can do, and that is to teach children. They may have failed at everything else they have tried, but they never doubt that they will succeed as teachers. You may tell them as often as you like that people must be taught to teach, that teaching is a fine art, and one very difficult to learn, but they will not believe you.

Of course the more knowledge a teacher has the better, but we may have much knowledge and not be at all capable of imparting it. Education does not mean putting information into a child's mind, but drawing out his faculties to the highest development, and this is a task which can only be accomplished by the possessors of very fine moral qualities. A man may be a great scholar but quite unable to maintain discipline because he lacks firmness and weight of character. His pupils do not respect him, and he has no influence upon them. Children and horses feel instinctively

when they are in the hands of one who cannot manage them:

O'er wayward children wouldst thou hold firm rule,
And sun thee in the light of happy faces?
Love, Hope, and Patience—these must be thy graces,
But in thine own heart let them first keep school.

He or she who does not love and reverence children will not have that genuine sympathy which is necessary in order to understand them. Some teachers seem to be incapable of thinking back on their own early youth, and give their pupils the impression that they have always been grown up. Feeling in this way not understood, or misunderstood, a child has not courage to state his difficulties. The result is that explanations like that of a certain mother are given. She was reading to her little boy, and stopped every now and then to explain and to ask him if he understood. 'Yes, mummy, I do when you don't explain.'

A teacher should know when his assistance is required, and when, not being required, it should not be given. As much as possible should be done by children themselves, and as little as possible for them. A good teacher does not think out the lesson for his pupils. Rather he becomes the cause of thinking in them, knowing as he does that 'Easy come, easy go' is a saying quite as applicable to knowledge as to wealth. Sympathetic imagination is required by teachers to note the difficulties of pupils from their point of view. It is not enough to repeat explanations in the same words. A child may see a thing in one light and not in another; and here there is room for great ingenuity in discovering more and more intelligible statements—in ringing the changes of explanation.

After love the next thing that is most necessary in a teacher is hope. His creed should be that of the late head-master of Uppingham School, who used to say that every boy is good for something. In an address to an association of teachers the present head-master of Harrow said: 'Looking back over my own school-days, as I recall the names not only of the gifted popular boys who have come to grief, but of other boys who led poor, valueless lives then, as they seemed to be, and yet have been reclaimed in after-time by one cause or other, it is forced upon me, as a truth I can never forget, that not even the lowest boy is incapable of the highest good. That is why there is one word, though only one, that I have simply begged my colleagues never to use in their reports of boys—the word "hopeless." Masters and mistresses may perhaps be hopeless—I cannot tell; but boys and girls—never.'

The last sentence reminds me of a retort which a 'dull' student once made. Professor: 'You seem to be very dull. When Alexander the Great was your age he had already conquered the world.' Student: 'Well, you see, he had Aristotle for a teacher.'

Since the days of Sir Isaac Newton there has not arisen a greater man of science than Charles Darwin, and yet he was considered by his father and schoolmasters as 'a very ordinary boy, rather below the common standard in intellect.' 'To my deep mortification,' he tells us, 'my father once said to me, "You care for nothing but shooting, dogs, and rat-catching, and you will be

a disgrace to yourself and all your family." Young Darwin had 'strong and diversified tastes.' So has many a boy who is considered dull and stupid because his tastes do not coincide with those of his companions, or are not of the kind that his parents and teachers consider most profitable. The boy Darwin was called 'Gas,' because, with his brother, he got up a small chemical laboratory in the tool-house of the school garden, and spent his leisure hours there making gases and compounds instead of joining the boys in their games. He was also publicly rebuked by the head-master for wasting his time 'on such useless subjects.' Darwin the philosopher has taught us that evolution is a slow process, and his teaching was exemplified in Darwin the boy.

A gentleman happened to be in a school when a spelling-lesson was going on. One little fellow stood apart, looking sad and dispirited. 'Why does that boy stand there?' asked the gentleman. 'Oh, he is good for nothing,' replied the school-master. 'There is nothing in him. I can make nothing of him. He is the most stupid boy in the school.' The gentleman was surprised at this answer. He saw that the teacher was so stern and rough that the younger and more timid were nearly crushed. He said a few words to the scholars, and then, placing his hand on the noble brow of the little fellow who stood there, remarked, 'One of these days you may be a fine scholar. Don't give up, but try, my boy, try.' The boy's spirit was aroused. His dormant intellect awoke. A new purpose was formed. From that hour he became studious and ambitious to excel. And he did become a fine scholar, and the author of a well-known commentary on the Bible, a great and good man, beloved and honoured. It was Dr Adam Clarke.

Genius has been defined as 'long patience,' but this definition would suit equally well good teaching. If in instructing a child you are vexed with it for want of adroitness, try, if you have never tried before, to write with your left hand, and remember that a child is all left hand. 'Why do you tell that blockhead the same thing twenty times over?' asked some one of Mrs Wesley, the mother of John Wesley, when she was teaching one of her children. 'Because,' was the reply, 'if I told him only nineteen times, I should have lost all my labour.'

He or she who is not a student of human nature must fail as a teacher. The early Jesuits, who were masters of education, were accustomed to keep secret registers of their observations on their pupils; and generations afterwards, when these records were examined, it is said the happy prescience of their remarks was proved by the subsequent careers of those who had been noted.

Another practice of these Jesuits was to hand over the youngest and least advanced pupils to the best teachers. This was wise; for, while any one with industry, a good memory, and a fair amount of brains can by cramming obtain sufficient knowledge to instruct in the mysteries of the 'higher education,' there are not many who possess such gifts of mind and temper as enable them to deal wisely with little children, to develop their intellect and mould their characters. Infant education should be considered the highest branch of the profession of teaching. The worse the material, the greater the skill of the worker.

A lively manner (not a jumpy one) is essential to good teaching. Let the teacher who is always complaining of the inattention of his pupils sometimes ask himself, 'Have I given them anything to attend to?' The teacher must not be a lifeless note of interrogation. Rather he should be the match that fires the train of his pupils' thoughts. His questions will be suggestive, asked not to confound but to encourage. Of course this implies that the teacher should himself be a learner, else his mind would become lifeless and incapable of kindling thought in others. An able teacher is never satisfied with the knowledge that he may possess at any time during his career of teaching, but keeps himself in constant training by fresh draughts hastily snatched during recreation hours. And he has his reward in finding that his own mind is receiving the best possible culture; for, as the Latin proverb says, 'If you would be wise, read; if more wise, study; if wisest of all, teach.'

O'ER SEA AND LAND.

CHAPTER II.

THREE nights later there was a meeting of that same Chums' Club to which Miss Blake had made reference as likely to be an offence to her guardian. It was an opinion sufficiently well grounded, inasmuch as Mr Denovan objected 'on principle' to all clubs except White's and the Athenæum, which he was pleased to consider old enough and learned enough to be respectable. But the Chums' was neither old nor learned.

Only the other day I saw, sitting at a suburban concert, wrapped in a fur-lined coat and wearing the air of a well-to-do father of a family, one of the men who, a quarter of a century since, was a member of that band. Far enough removed from romance did the portly stockbroker look, as he leaned back in his chair and watched his son conducting an operetta of the lad's own composing. But early in the year '70—when the Franco-German war was still merely in the air, and long before the Queen had been proclaimed Empress of India, when the Nihilists were yet plotting against Alexander II., and electric-lighting was a thing of the distant future—Alfred Morley used to spend many of his evenings in the company of Ernest Mannering and the rest of the sworn fraternity, entering with as much enthusiasm as the rest of his compeers into the concerns of their unique association.

For the Chums' Club had, at any rate, the merit of originality. Limited to ten members, each of whom must of necessity be less than thirty years of age, yet a partner in a mercantile firm and well endowed with this world's goods, the bond which united the brotherhood was of the strangest and simplest.

It consisted of a covenant, to which every man, on admission, appended his signature, to stand by each other in all emergencies, including those of a pecuniary nature. To this end each member undertook to advance any sum up to the maximum limit of five thousand pounds when such might be required to push the interests or defend the reputation of a comrade. And thus every Chum, driven to the end of his own resources, had always

forty-five thousand pounds at call, repayable at a time convenient to himself.

Thus far the requisitions had been few and of small amount. To-night, however, an important matter was upon the tapis, as Ernest perceived the moment that he entered the room—it was, in reality, merely one of the smoking-rooms belonging to a much larger club, of which the Chums constituted a kind of inner circle.

'What's up?' he inquired as he sat down and stretched out his long legs in an attitude more comfortable than graceful, addressing his inquiry to the world at large.

'Clements has made the call in full,' responded Tomkins, the honorary secretary; 'and there are differences of opinion upon the subject of payment,' he added, with one of his hearty laughs.

'Why, all the world knows that Hancox & Webber are more than shaky,' retorted Knox, who already looked heated with argument and rather angry; 'and I for one don't feel like giving away five thou', whatever Ellis may do.'

Richard Ellis, an enormously tall and correspondingly ugly giant, with—when he chose—the bluntest tongue and worst manners of any known man, grunted and went on stuffing a villainous-looking clay pipe.

'Certainly one can't help seeing the difference between lending to a man who is sure to pay and chucking one's money into the gutter,' observed Miller suavely from behind the cloud of smoke which half-concealed him. 'But still'—

'There's no "but still" about it,' Knox cried. 'I ain't going to do it. So there. And you'll agree with me, Mannering, I expect, if you've a grain of sense in you. Morris does, and so does Franklin.'

'I never said so!' 'Not I!' sounded simultaneously from a corner of the room where four men were playing whist; and Knox looked, for the instant, disconcerted.

'Then all that I can say'—he was beginning, when Ernest calmly interrupted him.

'It's in the bond,' he remarked quietly. 'Tomkins, I'll send you mine to-morrow. Come, Cynic, a Croesus like you can dub upon the spot. Got your cheque-book with you? Now, gentlemen all, make your arrangements, please. There's a week's notice due if one cares to claim it; isn't there, Tomkins?'

It was thus that, at the appeal of the junior partner in the firm, the Chums' Club saved Hancox's bank—the debt, by-the-by, being cleared off within a twelvemonth.

But that was a result which, of course, no one could at present predict. From which cause it came about that Ernest, as he walked with Ellis towards the latter's rooms that night, said suddenly with some anxiety, 'I hope Clem will be able to pay sometime.'

'Pshaw!' from the other. 'Right as nine-pence, or wouldn't have let the club in. Answer for Clem! See?'

Ernest laid an affectionate hand upon his friend's arm. They had known and loved each other from boyhood, though, with English reserve, their devotion seldom found expression by word or sign.

'Who wouldn't you answer for, old man? Why, I believe you'd even trust me, lawyer though

you be! But you needn't think me stingy. You won't when you hear my news.'

'Can tell it you fresh,' with curt assurance.

Mannering laughed.

'If ever I intended to make another bet I'd give you ten to one'—

'Benedict in prospect. Knew a week ago; and he continued his onward tramp without a glance at Ernest, who gasped by way of response.

'Had some business at Shoreton ten days back. Tried to get hold of man named Ford. Been buying up land there, and wants some of the gov'nor's. Couldn't catch beggar, but passed two folks on the cliff instead. Saw it was a case.'

'Well, you are— But why on earth didn't you stop and speak?'

'Two's company, three's none,' laconically. 'Shouldn't wonder if you weren't having it out at that very moment. Any way, looked absorbed enough. Rather nice little girl, too.'

'She's just perfect,' answered the lover, in all seriousness. 'As to engaged—I wish we were! We understand each other. But there's a beast of an old uncle—and he's put me on probation and that sort of thing, don't you know? And if between now and November—and this is only March, mind—I don't behave myself like—like—well, a walking dummy'—

Ellis grunted—not an unusual form of reply with him, or so his traducers declared.

'Never met one. But here's place. Better come in and use language at the uncle in comfort.'

To which the other, who was yearning for a confidant, and for Ellis in particular in that capacity, readily assented. As a consequence the hum of voices—mainly indeed, it must be confessed, of Mannering's voice—continued in Ellis's room for the next two hours. Nor was it until at length he rose to leave that Ernest reverted to the subject of Clements.

'So now you understand why I can't very well afford to lose the cash,' he said. 'Of course I have something! Still, five thousand is a slice out of it.' Then rather gloomily, 'If things were as they ought to have been he could have had it and welcome.'

'When there's nothing better to do, sometimes speculate how that Indian fortune vanished,' remarked Ellis, who never by any chance used a needless syllable or dispensable pronoun. 'In lawyer's line to smell out riddles of that sort.'

'Got any fresh notions?' with a little eagerness. For Ellis, when he was pleased to give his mind to a problem, was not without a certain shrewdness of his own. Indeed, those who were best acquainted with the man were wont to declare that had he been born to poverty he would have grown up into fame. But on this occasion he shook his head.

'One!' he replied. 'What can't be cured must be endured. See?'

Of course the months of his probation passed more quickly than Mannering, in his impatience at the beginning, had thought possible. Until the present time he had really never understood much about love. Above all had he been in ignorance of the power of woman's love, his mother having died at his birth. And although the pallid-faced, Indian-bred boy had been the pet and darling of his father for a few years, his health, as much as his educational needs, had,

whilst he was still very young, compelled a voyage in search of English breezes and an English home. It was his weakness which thus proved the means of his preservation from the Mutiny in which his father perished.

Secure and sheltered as it was, however, the orphan lad's life had been very dreary until he met Katie! And then for him, as for all true lovers, the golden thread began to appear in the web of existence, lending a glory to the whole.

Apparently it had not been particularly difficult to preserve such very limited good graces as Mr Denovan had at first extended to him. Far too honest wilfully to deceive the clergyman, Ernest did not attempt to deny his 'little vices.' And before he had been a visitor at the vicarage for a fortnight Mr Denovan had discovered his affection both for pipe and club. The vicar had, however, made no remark; and long ago both Miss Blake and Mannering had become convinced that he had reconciled himself to such inevitable peccadilloes.

'I believe he considers you rather an exemplary sort of youth, upon the whole,' Katie assured Ernest merrily one day in October, when they were standing together near the window, watching, as well as the darkness permitted, the deplorable state of the weather. 'I wish, though, you hadn't come to-day. What a journey back you will have!'

'A trifle moist, certainly,' he laughed. And his was a most pleasant laugh, brightening his every feature. 'But I had to come in order to tell you that I can't be here on Saturday. Ellis has business at Shoreton, where, you remember, his father has some property that occasionally wants looking after. He has asked me to run down with him.'

'It'll do you good,' with unselfish promptitude. 'Dear old Shoreton! What a pity I can't be there too!'

She looked up into his eyes with a smile. All very well for a bachelor uncle to veto every lover-like demonstration. But, with the best intentions in the world, two people who care for each other, and who are mutually conscious of the fact, cannot on every occasion conceal all sign of their affection, even should they wish. And perhaps Katie did not wish. Such disobedience is conceivable.

'What a pity I can't take you!' with an answering smile. 'Do you remember that walk along the top of the cliffs, my darling?'

A question which opened the way to many reminiscences. For it was at Shoreton, whilst on a visit to the hospitably inclined Salters, who had taken a house there for the spring, that Katie had first been made acquainted with another of their guests, Mr Ernest Mannering. It was an introduction that had had results!

'But the sea will look frightfully damp at this time of year,' the girl remarked by-and-by, with a little shiver. 'It always does in October.'

'Not to mention that it owns the same peculiarity in every other month of the twelve,' rejoined her uncle, rather to her surprise. She had not seen him come into the room, her back being towards the door.

'You are so abominably practical,' she retorted, going up to him and touching his overcoat daintily here and there with her fingers. He

had but this moment returned from sundry visitations. 'Nobody would dream of dampness in August. But it isn't only the sea that is wet just now. You are to change your garments this minute, or I shall have an invalid on my hands. If you'—turning to Ernest—'must really catch the seven ten, say good-bye quick and let him go away.'

'Mr Mannering'—with due propriety—'is going to Shoreton on Saturday, uncle.'

'A pleasant journey to you,' was the polite wish of Mr Denovan, who was nothing if not civil. And Katie echoed the hope as she stood by the hall-door and let the traveller out. If on such occasions a kiss were sometimes exchanged, was it very surprising? Surely even the vicar must have guessed as much.

Shoreton was certainly, during these closing weeks of autumn, not the pleasantest of haunts. And it may have been with a view to the counteraction of dullness that Ellis ultimately persuaded, not Mannering alone, but three or four other 'Chums' to travel down from London and to take up their abode with him for forty-eight hours at the Queen's Hotel.

'Though I can't for the life of me understand the reason you wanted to stop two days in this disgusting hole at all,' as Tomkins remarked, after having obtained from the sole and solitary waiter the cheering information that the theatre was closed, the Spa undergoing repairs, and no amusement of any sort or kind attainable. 'Why on earth not have put off coming till to-morrow or Monday, instead of inveigling us into such a trap to keep you going?'

'Only one Sunday train. That leaves London six A.M. Monday earliest gets in here at ten. Nine's the unholy hour friend Ford named. Slippery customer Ford, so had to agree. Come and explore. Better than getting a hump over this beastly fire. Whist afterwards.'

But even to the explorer the locality at this season was devoid of attraction. To Mannering it seemed actually a different place from the bright little spot where he had spent so many happy moments; though, in reality, the only changes were from March sunshine to October dreariness, from Katie's presence to Katie's absence. Shoreton itself had, for the few years of its existence, been much what it was now, a brand-new and still-spreading seaside settlement perched on the very verge of a cliff overlooking the Atlantic. It lay within the limits of the larger and more important borough of Upton, a town big enough and favoured enough to possess a mayor and corporation of its own, and to boast a considerable resident population. But in Shoreton almost every villa had been built with a view to summer 'letting,' and only by the business thus done during the season did the place prosper. It was owned entirely by the speculator Ford, who had bought the land some ten years since for 'an old song'—with whom, also, Ellis's present business lay.

'Disagreeable chap, folks say,' Richard explained, in answer to inquiries, as the party wandered along the deserted esplanade, making a somewhat dispirited return towards the inn. A sea fret was rising rapidly, and probably not a man of the five but was heartily wishing himself back in London.

'Never met the creature myself. Came from nobody knows where. Thought no end of her, though—Mayor of Upton, and J.P., and goodness alone knows what.'

'Here's the Queen's—why Queen's?—at last,' groaned Morris thankfully. 'Now for something hot, outside and in.'

They all tramped into the vestibule, shaking the glistening mist-drops from hats and coats. All but Mannering. He, with a half-shy, half-laughing glance at Ellis, turned off into the fog again. 'Be with you in half-an-hour,' he called back over his shoulder, in response to a general shout of surprise, to which he gave no further heed.

As a matter of fact the desire had seized him once more to behold the cliff path, where months ago he had first heard from Katie the whispered assurance of her love. And with a little smile at himself for the fancy—why do men so often mock at their softer impulses?—he set out upon the expedition. A fateful expedition it was to prove.

In spite of the gray gloom and the absence of gas-lamps, he had not much difficulty as to the road. The white chalkiness of the narrow track made itself always visible, after a feeble glimmering sort, for a few feet ahead; and though in places the way lay almost dangerously near the edge of the precipice, from the foot of which came up the sullen rumble of unseen waves, Ernest had no occasion to dread losing this guidance.

For about a mile he followed the dimly-defined thread, stopping every now and again as he reached a spot which he recognised, and when the sweet face of his gentle love seemed to recur with special vividness to his recollection. For Ernest was very young, very impressionable, and, in spite of his self-ridicule, very much in love. But he reached the end of his pilgrimage at last; and after pausing for a few moments to lean against the gate beyond which the path finally merged into the highway, and to gaze out into the fleecy blankness which to-night replaced the well-remembered expanse of shining ocean, he began to retrace his steps.

Not a single living being had he encountered upon his journey hither. Now, however, by the time that he had retraversed about half the distance, he became conscious of voices on ahead, proceeding, so it seemed, from the heart of the mirk. And gradually he was able to distinguish, by the difference of tones, that two men were conversing together in this lonely spot. Not until he was almost upon them, however, was he able to perceive either of the speakers.

'—was how Jehan find the Sahib,' were the first distinctly audible syllables that reached Ernest's ear as he advanced. They were spoken in a shrill, thin voice that seemed to cut the mist like a knife; and there was about their delivery a vibration of passion that attracted the hearer's attention even more than the quaint phraseology and the guttural accents. 'And now'

'Who wanted you to find me?' in an angry growl, unmistakably that of an Englishman. 'You men are'—and there he changed his language, and, speaking rapidly, poured forth a torrent of sounds altogether unintelligible to Ernest. Not so, however, to the other auditor,

who, with something between a shout and a shriek, burst in upon the speech. It was just as the man gave utterance to that inarticulate exclamation that Ernest caught sight of the disputants.

They were standing close—too close for security—to the cliff's edge; one, who was tall and swarthy, and who wore a turban, being the nearer of the two. It was he who, with a countenance convulsed with fury, with flashing dark eyes and clenched fists, was hissing out words from between his shut teeth.

'The Sahib say that!' he yelled in his anger. 'But Jehan know different. Jehan see bright stones; Jehan understand where come from. And if Jehan tell'—

Neither of the pair had heeded Ernest's approach, so thick was the fog and so engrossed were they in their conversation. Even now that he was but a yard or two away, Jehan, who was facing him, did not seem consciously to observe him; whilst the short, thick-set individual who confronted the oriental, and whose back, therefore, was towards Mannering, never turned his head. Instead he spoke:

'Tell!' he echoed. 'You fool! You shall never tell'—with which he stretched out his strong right hand, on which, even in that second, Ernest caught the flash of some brilliant stone, and struck his opponent full in the face. Jehan, taken utterly off his guard, made one backward step. There was a wild, appalling shriek that rang far out over the sea, followed by another and yet another cry, each fainter than the last. Finally, there was an awful thud, succeeded by a silence. And where three men had been standing but two remained.

It was at that moment that the Englishman moved, to find himself face to face with Mannering. For the space of a full minute the pair thus strangely met could only stare. Each gazed into the other's white visage, trying, as well as the gray darkness allowed, to read the expression written thereon. It was Ernest who first regained the use of his tongue.

'Is there no way to get down?' he cried, with strong excitement. 'He may not be dead. At any rate his body must be recovered.'

His companion, taking out of his pocket a handkerchief, drew it hurriedly across his damp, pallid forehead.

'You saw it was an accident?' he exclaimed, with obvious anxiety, going up to Ernest and laying his hand upon the young man's coat-sleeve. 'Give me your name. I may depend upon your evidence?'

But Mannering shook off the touch of those fingers. 'My name! What does it matter now? Ernest Mannering, if you want it. But which is the way down?' he repeated.

For an instant yet the stranger hesitated. Almost Ernest could have fancied that he had become more agitated than before. But at last he turned towards Shoreton, with the single word 'Come.' And Ernest followed close at his heels.

It was not until they were within call of the first few scattered houses that either of the men made another observation. Mannering was too horrified, as well as too intent on rendering any possible aid to the sufferer, for speech. As to his

guide, who could tell the thoughts that were chasing each other through his brain? But when they reached a sort of gully, dark and steep, which led downwards to the beach, he broke the silence. 'That will take you to the spot,' he said. 'I will go and get further help.'

OF TURTLE.

By F. T. BULLEN.

By popular consent the rash act of the daring man who first devoured an oyster has been greatly extolled, but what meed of praise should be awarded to that dim and distant discoverer who first essayed to break into and devour the flesh of the armour-clad tortoise or turtle? All unarmed as he doubtless must have been, except for spear of chipped flint or charred stick, the mere entry within the *domus* of the reptile, even by way of the leathery neck or flank, must have been no easy feat.

But, once having tasted such good meat, how rapidly the good news must have been spread by our friend! Here was a banquet indeed, ready to hand, for the acquisition of which none of the ordinary attributes of the chase were needed. Speed, courage, endurance, cunning, all could be dispensed with, while even the most unenlightened 'salvage-man' would hardly need the information that it were wise to avoid the front end of the sluggish creature, with its terrible jaws of keen-edged shell.

Since those far-off days mankind has been faithful in its love for the genus *Testudo*, whether terrestrial or marine, wherever edible members of it could be obtained; but when and why the consumption of turtle-soup became with us a synonym for the highest luxury in the way of food, and indissolubly associated with the royal hospitality of the Lord Mayor, is indeed a question to be answered. One may be permitted to suppose that, during the reign of some more than usually gifted *cordon bleu*, the grand discovery was made that the peculiar flesh of this succulent reptile lent itself most amicably and gelatinously to the wonderful disguise with which it is invested ere it becomes the dream of the epicure. The pages of ancient Latin writers abound with descriptions, not only of strange foods, but stranger modes of preparing them for the table, the mere recital of which to-day is often sufficient to effectually banish appetite. Among these early recipes are many for dealing with the flesh of both land and sea tortoises. According to their light those ancient cooks excelled in curious ways of dressing turtle, or rather disguising it, for it must be confessed that turtle-steak *au naturel* is not of that exquisite flavour to appeal to the palate like a plain beefsteak or mutton-chop. Good, wholesome, and tender as it undoubtedly is, it tastes more like veal with a nuance of fish than anything else in the best kinds; while many turtles, from feeding upon cuttle-fish, have a decidedly unpleasant, musky flavour. Few flesh foods pall quicker upon the palate. In most West Indian coast towns an abundant meal of turtle can be obtained for the equivalent of sixpence whenever required, but except by those whose object is to fill up cheaply and quickly, it is little appreciated.

I was once mate of a barque gathering a cargo of mahogany along the Mexican coast, and while

lying at Tonala the supply of fresh beef ran short. The skipper bought a fine large turtle for a mere trifle from some fishermen, and rather chuckled at the prospect of getting two days' meat for less than the usual price of one. He gave orders to the worn-out seaman whom, in common with vessels of that class, we carried as cook how to apportion the joints. At eight bells a procession of weary-looking men slouched aft, the foremost one bearing a kid of something. Halting at the break of the poop, the spokesman inquired for the captain. That gentleman stepped briskly forward, saying, 'Well, what's up now?' 'What d'ye call *that*, sir?' said the man. '*That*,' said the skipper, giving just a glance at the queer-looking mess in the kid; 'why, yer so-and-so idiot, *that's* what the Lord Mayor gives about a guinea a hounce for. Why, only the haristocracy gets a charnce at 'ome to eat the likes o' *that*.' 'Oh, very well,' said the man; 'p'raps you'll eat it yourself then, sir, since it's so — good, and give us what we signed for. We aint crockeydiles to eat shell-fish, shells an' all.' With that he planted his little tub, with its strange contents, down on the poop and stalked forward again, followed by his scowling shipmates. I am bound to admit that there was little room for wonder that Jack on this occasion preferred *salt horse* to boiled turtle.

But this is by the way. Of terrestrial Chelones there is an immense variety distributed over almost the whole land surface of the globe where the mean annual temperature does not fall below 60°. The flesh of these reptiles is, with few exceptions, notably that of the American Terrapin, very lightly esteemed by civilised peoples, and in some species highly poisonous. A very strange fact concerning land tortoises is the presence of the largest members of the family upon such widely separated and inhospitable spots as Aldabra and Agalegas Islands in the Indian Ocean, and the Galapagos group in the South Pacific. In these lonely islets—for they are hardly more—enormous specimens of these strange reptiles crawl sluggishly about, grazing upon the scanty herbage, secure from all enemies except man, and apparently gifted with incredible longevity. As far as natural decay is concerned, they would certainly appear to be unaffected by the flight of time, although one need not believe unless he wants to the story of the sailor of one upon whose shell he saw carved the legend, 'The Ark—Captain Noah; Ararat, for orders.' The Galapagos eat them during scarcity of other food, but do not hanker after them as regular diet. They do, however, prize the fat oil which some of these reptiles possess in great abundance, and whenever they catch one and do not need its flesh, they cut a slit in the leathery skin between the upper and lower shells near the tail and take a peep within. If the victim be not fat enough for their purpose they release him, and he shuffles off apparently quite unaffected by this rough surgery. Indeed, such is the incredible vitality of these reptiles that they have been known to live for six months after having their brains entirely removed, and one existed for twenty-three days after its head had been cut off.

Redi, the well-known Italian surgeon, who made these apparently useless experiments, states that, upon opening the body of the last-mentioned

tortoise, on the twenty-third day he saw the triple heart beating, and the blood entering and leaving it. What he hoped to establish by such cruel doings is not stated by him.

The varieties of land tortoises are exceedingly numerous, and embrace some very peculiar forms, notably the *Emysaura serpentina*, which is a kind of compromise between a lizard and a tortoise, lives in and around Oriental lakes and rivers, and feeds indiscriminately upon small fish, reptiles, and birds. The *Chelodina Nova Hollandiae* of Australia, with its long snake-like neck and wide gaping jaws; the *Chelys matamata*, loving stagnant pools, and adorned about the head and neck with sprouting fringes like bunches of rootlets, giving it a most uncanny appearance; and the *Gymnopus* of African rivers, which feeds upon young crocodiles, and whose flesh is nevertheless most delicate and highly prized, and many others, furnish a most interesting study, but not strictly germane to our subject, which is turtle—the *Thalassians* or oceanic tortoises, from which alone our supplies are drawn.

Among marine tortoises or turtles there is vastly less variety than among their congeners of the land. Sir Richard Owen decided that only five well-defined species are known to exist at the present time, although the fossil remains of true turtles show that a much greater range of these varieties existed in prehistoric times. The principal difference between tortoise and turtle is the shape of the paws, which in the land varieties are always armed with claws, and have a strong likeness to the legs of a lizard. In the turtles these clawed feet become flippers, almost fins, wonderfully adapted for swimming purposes, but rendering the turtle when on land more helpless and clumsy in his locomotion than even a seal.

Turtles are true amphibians, although, owing to the extent and volume of their arbitrary lungs, and perhaps also to their general sluggishness of habit, they can and do remain under water for a longer time than any other amphibian with the exception, perhaps, of the crocodile. But, like the saurian just mentioned, it is imperative that they leave the sea periodically for the purpose of laying their eggs, which they do in loose sand, leaving them to be hatched by the heat of the sun. It has been authoritatively stated that when the young turtle first emerges from the egg his shell is not formed, and that he is white in colour. Perhaps different species may account for a discrepancy here; but I can only say that, having, for many hours, along the shores of islets in the Caribbean Sea and around the Gulf of Mexico, amused myself by digging up turtles' and crocodiles' eggs, breaking them, and sending the lively occupants afloat, I have never seen either a white or a shell-less one. Of course the shell was not of the substance one would expect in a full-grown individual, but it was hard and perfectly formed, while the tiny creature was wonderfully swift in its movements. Innumerable enemies await the infant turtle, extending even to his own kind, and but a small percentage of those hatched are privileged to arrive at maturity. Nevertheless, such is the fecundity of these reptiles, that their numbers are exceedingly large, and even where old-established stations for turtle-catching exist, no diminution of their numbers is ever seen.

Having reached a weight of about twenty-five pounds, they are thenceforth safe from all enemies except man, and even he gets but scant opportunity to molest them save when they visit their favourite beaches for family purposes.

When a lad of thirteen I had the misfortune to be cast away upon one of the reef-fringed islets in the Bay of Campêche. The vessel became a total wreck, and we escaped to the islet, finding it bare of everything but an immense number of boobies and frigate-birds, the beach being covered with the eggs of the former, and the rocks plentifully besprinkled with the eggs of the latter. The first night of our stay I was taking a lonely stroll along the beach—the whole circuit of the isle could be made under an hour—when I saw a light cloud of sand rising from the smooth white plain just ahead of me. At first the idea of an inrush of the sea occurred to me; but going carefully nearer, I saw an immense black centre to the misty spot, apparently digging furiously. Hurrying back to camp, I gave the alarm, and three of the men accompanied me back. Without any difficulty they managed to secure the creature, which was an enormous turtle weighing not less than 1800 lbs. It was rather a tough job turning her over, but once on her broad back she was helpless, and was speedily towed to camp. Next morning at daybreak she was butchered, and more than eight hundred eggs, of which only thirteen were with shells, were taken from her ovary. The shell was so large that it made me a splendid bath. The meat was all removed and hung up, only the head and tail being left attached to the shell. Late that afternoon a young Dane, for some foolish reason or another, must needs go and introduce two of his fingers into the open mouth of the apparently dead head. Like the action of an iron-shearing press the jaws closed, taking off the two fingers as clean as possible. Then another man essayed to cut off the tail, but as soon as the knife entered the skin the tail curled up and gripped the blade, and it was nearly an hour before he could withdraw it. So that their vitality must be little, if any, inferior to that of the land tortoise.

One of the most favoured spots frequented by turtle is, or used to be, the desolate island of Ascension in the South Atlantic, a barren volcanic patch belonging to Britain, and, because used exclusively as a naval dépôt, entered upon the books of the Admiralty as one of Her Majesty's ships. An enormous number of turtle were annually 'turned' there, and preserved in a small lagoon from shipment to shipment. It was my pleasant privilege to assist at one of these turnings, and I bear a very vivid recollection of the game. Crouched low behind an immense boulder one evening about eight, we could hear a hollow reverberating murmur of the mighty surf outside, suggesting sleepily irresistible force. A dazzling wreath of snowy foam, gleaming like burnished silver, fringed the quiet stretch of glittering sand, which, gently sloping upward and landward, was bounded by gloomy bastions of black lava. Beyond that shining semicircle of glowing white lay the sombre blue-black bosom of the quiet little bay now heaving gently as that of a sleeping child. Hither and thither, threading its inscrutable depths, glided spectrally broad tracks of greenish light, vivid, yet ever brightening and fading, as if

of living flame. Presently there emerged from the retreating smother of spume a creeping something of no very definite shape, under the glamour of the molten moonlight, but making an odd shuffling progress inland, and becoming more recognisable as it rose. Another, and yet another, and still more arrived as the shining tracks converged shorewards. At last the dark shapes came near enough for a novice to know them for turtle. Soon the first-comers reached their limit, and began the work for which they had come. Each massive reptile, by an indescribable motion of its fore-flippers, delved into the yielding grit, throwing the spoil behind it and upward withal until it was enveloped in a misty halo of shining sand. Then the whole beach was alive with the toiling Chelones and their male attendants, who shuffled about, emitting curious noises, but whether of encouragement or affection this deponent sayeth not.

Divers of them came from far—so far that none who have not witnessed the swift cleaving of their true element by these ungainly monsters could believe how the wide sweep of those eager flippers devours the fleeting leagues. In a short time many of the delving turtles had sunk below the level of the surrounding sand, while some had ceased their digging and commenced to deposit their eggs. Suddenly we rushed upon them, and for some minutes the swarming beach was apparently a scene of wild confusion. Really, the plan of attack was well ordered; and when the first scurry was over nearly all the visitors were to be seen wrong side up, waving their flippers deprecatingly. In less than half-an-hour the loneliness was again regnant, all the victims having been towed off through a gap in the rocks to a spacious spoilarium in the lagoon behind, there to await their transit to the goal of most good things, London town.

While the capture of turtle upon a sandy shore necessarily admits of but few variations, the pursuit of these reptiles in their proper element lends itself to many peculiarities. How often does the ever-hungry sailor, striving wearily to forget his plentiful lack of tasty eatables while on the look-out of some calm-bound 'wind-jammer,' get a delightful thrill upon seeing the broad shining back of a sleeping *Spharga* calmly floating upon the sunlit surface of the silent sea! Visions of 'a fresh mess for all hands' nerve the watch to desperate efforts in order to quickly free the gig from its long-disused trammels. Once afloat, there are several ways of securing the prize. Roughly, the orthodox method is for one hand to 'scull' the boat with one oar over the stern *à la Chinoise*, while one stationed in the bow may, when near enough, drive a harpoon through the carapace of the slumberer. Or one may not. And candour compels the statement that the percentage of successes is not high. If the performer be not very expert with the weapon—and very few sailors are—the result is usually a burst of angry jeers from disappointed shipmates, and a few eddying swirls on the surface whence the awakened turtle has fled in amazement.

Another way practised most successfully by the amphibious Kanakas of Polynesia is to slip noiselessly into the water, and diving beneath the turtle, grasp the hind-flippers with crossed hands. One swift and dexterous twist places the prize on his back, in which helpless position he is kept

with ease upon the surface until the canoe arrives, and he is transferred to it. Among the coral reefs of the Friendly Islands turtle-fishing is a highly favoured form of sport, and when the reptiles are surprised among the tortuous shallow channels between the reefs or in the almost land-locked lagoons, they rarely escape. Here it is usual for the fisherman to spring upon the turtle's back, and, clutching the fore edge of the shell with both hands, to hang on until his prize is exhausted and speedily brought to the surface.

But of all the fashions of securing this much-hunted creature, that followed by the ingenious fisher-folk of the Chinese littoral bears away the palm. Most voyagers in tropical seas are acquainted with a peculiar fish, *E. remora*, known generally by the trivial name of the 'sucker.' The distinguishing characteristic of this fish is laziness. Unwilling to exert itself overmuch in the pursuit of food, it has developed an arrangement on the back of its head exactly like the corrugated sole of a tennis-shoe, and as artificial in appearance as if made and fitted by the hand of man. When the sucker finds itself in the vicinity of any large floating body, such as a ship, a shark, or a piece of flotsam, whose neighbourhood seems to promise an abundance of food, it attaches itself firmly thereto by means of this curious contrivance, which permits it to eat, breathe, and perform all necessary functions while being carried about without any exertion on its part. It can attach and detach itself instantaneously, and holds so firmly that a direct backward pull cannot dislodge it without injury to the fish. The Chinese, who have successfully trained the cormorant and the otter to fish for them, have taken the remora in hand with the happiest results. Several good-sized specimens having been caught, small iron rings are fitted to their tails, to which are attached long, slender, but very strong lines. Thus equipped, the fishermen set out, and when a basking turtle is seen, two or three of the suckers are slipped overboard. Should they turn and stick to the bottom of the sampan, they are carefully detached by being pushed forward with the inevitable bamboo, and started on the search again. At last they attach themselves to the supine turtle. Then the fishermen haul in the lines, against which gentle suasion the hapless Chelone struggles in vain. Once on board the lugger, the useful remora is detached, and is at once ready for use again.

The same mode of catching turtle is followed by the fishermen of the East African coast, from Mozambique northward. The coast of Africa has long been famous for its turtle, and Pliny tells of the Chelonophagi of the Red Sea, a race of turtle-eaters, who were able to obtain these creatures of so gigantic a size that they could utilise the carapaces for roofs to their dwellings and boats for their feeble voyages. Strabo also alludes to these people; but without accusing either of these venerable authorities of exaggeration, it is pretty certain that no such enormous specimens of Chelonia are ever met with in these days.

Tortoise-shell is well known to be furnished by the turtle, the best by the Hawk's Bill variety, which supplies the worst flesh, being exceedingly musky (*Chelone imbricata*). The green turtle (*Chelonee franche*) is most valuable for food, and attains, with another well-marked variety

(*Spharga coriacea*) the largest size of all turtles known. This latter has been sometimes taken on the coast of Britain, several of large size (700 to 800 lbs.) having been recorded as caught in our seas.

ELECTRICITY IN WARFARE, AND TELEGRAPHING WITHOUT WIRES.

PROBABLY no factor has been so potent in its effect upon modern civilisation as the application of electricity to industrial and everyday life. By the aid of the telegraph and telephone, the pulse of commercial life has been enormously quickened; and many new industries have arisen which owe their existence to our constantly increasing knowledge of the subtle force. Chief amongst these are electric lighting, electro-plating, the electrical extraction of metals from their ores, and electric welding—all of which have now become daily operations throughout the civilised world. Electricity has indeed wrought a mighty and peaceful revolution, and has enabled us to enjoy advantages undreamed of at the beginning of the present century.

The use of electricity, however, is not entirely confined to the arts of peace. Military authorities were quick to recognise the advantages possessed by the telegraph for the purposes of rapid communication with all parts of an army; and as the science has progressed, almost every important discovery has been applied to military purposes. Every warlike expedition has now a free equipment of electrical appliances; and any battlefield where the armies of the higher civilised nations were engaged would possess a complete electrical installation. Owing to the advantages gained by the use of these instruments, military operations have been greatly facilitated, with the result that electricity now occupies an important and indispensable position in modern warfare.

It is obvious that for military purposes all appliances used must be of such a character as to be readily placed in position, and should be as free as possible from complications, in order that the danger of failure may be reduced to a minimum. The exigencies of active service preclude the use of many of the delicate instruments so valuable for private and commercial purposes; and for this reason it has been found necessary to design special instruments which, while fulfilling all requirements, will endure the wear-and-tear of an active campaign. A brief description of these, and the purposes to which they are applied, will show how completely the application of electricity to warfare has been accomplished.

When an expedition—such as the one at present in progress in the Soudan—is being conducted, it is of paramount importance that the advance portion should be in communication with the rear. This is effected by the telegraph, for the working of which it is necessary that wires should connect the two portions of the expedition. As the erection of telegraph poles would be totally impracticable, a special wire with a damp-proof coating is employed, in order that the wire may be laid on the ground without danger of leakage on the part of the current. The wires are coiled

on a large drum connected with a wagon; and as the latter moves forward the drum revolves so as to allow the wire to uncoil and fall to the ground. When one drum is exhausted, a joint is made with the wire on a second one; and in this manner any length of line may be laid down with great facility.

The wires having been thus placed in position, connection is made with an ordinary battery, and a special form of telegraph instrument called Cardew's 'buzzer'—invented by Major Cardew, R.E.—and, in addition, a telephone receiver, which magnifies sound, is placed in the circuit. The 'buzzer' consists of a small electro-magnet, in front of which is a thin piece of iron plate fastened at one end. When a key is tapped the piece of iron is attracted to the magnet, causing a buzzing noise, which is faithfully reproduced at the other end of the line on a similar instrument, and there magnified by the receiver. The sound continues so long as the key is depressed; and hence sounds of any duration may be communicated along the wire. Hence the Morse alphabet, in which letters are represented by different mixtures of long and short sounds, may be employed in sending messages; and in this manner intelligence may be readily and simply conveyed. Even in the battlefield communication may thus be kept up between the various sections of the army; and the advantage of this system over signalling, which may be seen by the enemy or obscured by the smoke, is quite evident.

An equally useful application of electricity to warfare is to be found in the electrical firing of mines. Formerly a fuse, consisting of a piece of tow steeped in saltpetre and allowed to dry, was employed. This had to be ignited and placed in position, and was of such a length as to allow the operator to retire to a safe distance before the explosion took place. This method, however, was totally inapplicable to submarine mines, and an additional defect was the danger of premature explosion. The present electrical system, however, possesses none of these drawbacks; and by its aid mines may be fired with certainty from a great distance and at any given moment. In order to understand the device employed for this purpose it is only necessary to call to mind a well-known property of the electric current. When a thin piece of platinum wire is placed in a circuit connected with a powerful battery it becomes red-hot; and if the current be strong enough it may even be melted. It is upon this effect that the firing apparatus used in warfare depends. Two wires from a special battery terminate in the midst of the explosive material forming the mine, their extremities being connected by a thin piece of platinum wire. Round this is wrapped a small shred of gun-cotton, which in turn is embedded in a minute quantity of fulminate of mercury, the whole being surrounded by the material to be exploded. On a strong current being passed through the circuit the platinum wire becomes red-hot and ignites the gun-cotton; this causes the fulminate to explode with such violence that the whole of the surrounding charge is detonated by the shock, and the mine thus successfully fired.

Precisely similar in principle is the contrivance used for firing large guns; in which case, however, the platinum is merely surrounded by finely-

divided gunpowder, and placed in the midst of the charge. On the wire becoming heated, ignition immediately commences, and spreads rapidly throughout the charge.

The battery used for producing the required current is contained in a box, so as to be easily carried about. On pulling a handle an extremely minute current, insufficient to cause explosion, is made to pass through the circuit, to test the accuracy of the connections. Should everything be correct, a star appears in front of a glass window placed in one side of the box; and if now the handle be turned a more powerful current passes through the wires and the explosion ensues. Thus a mine or gun may not only be fired from a great distance, but the arrangements may be safely tested—results only possible where electricity is employed.

Within the last few months great attention has been directed to the apparatus brought to this country by Signor Marconi, the young Italian electrician. By means of this it is claimed that mines may be fired and telegraphic communication established without the aid of wires, even over distances of several miles and in spite of intervening obstacles. To what extent these statements are correct practice alone can show; but there is little doubt that some apparatus based on the principle of Marconi's will ultimately revolutionise our present system of telegraphy. A simple explanation of Marconi's appliances, therefore, may not be out of place.

Most people are aware that when a note of sufficient loudness is sung near an organ, the same note may frequently be elicited from the pipe whose note corresponds to the one uttered. This arises from the fact that sound is caused by a vibration in air, each note producing a particular rate of motion of the air particles. When a note is sung, therefore, the air inside the corresponding pipe is set into a similar state of vibration, and hence gives rise to what is called a 'sympathetic' sound. Now, electricity, like sound, results from a vibration; with the difference that the motion takes place, not in air, but in the infinitely more elastic medium scientists call 'ether,' which pervades all kinds of matter. This belief led the late Dr Hertz to conduct experiments with a view to obtaining a sympathetic response to electrical waves; and after overcoming great difficulties Hertz's masterly research was crowned with complete success. He caused an electric spark—which is merely a form of vibration—to induce a spark in a receiver placed at a considerable distance and entirely disconnected with the generating source; the only condition being that both receiver and generator were in *electrical* unison. It is upon this remarkable discovery that Marconi's improved apparatus is based. Sparks from an induction coil playing upon an ebonite sphere are made to elicit sympathetic sparks in a special receiver; and as the duration of the sparking may be controlled by the ordinary method of 'making' and 'breaking' the circuit, it is possible to produce a Morse alphabet in which letters are represented by long and short sparks, and thus convey messages without the aid of connecting wires. Further, an electric spark of this kind will ignite gunpowder and other explosives; and by placing a receiver in a mine, firing could be accomplished without the agency

of wires, and, as Marconi claims, from a distance of several miles. Such an apparatus, if successful, would be of great service in military operations, and would add one more to the list of nineteenth-century warlike inventions, which, from their enormous destructive capabilities, are regarded by many as the surest safeguards of peace.

TO ONE I LOVE.

I LOVE—what do I *not* love? Earth and air
Find space within my heart, and myriad things
You would not deign to heed are cherished there,
And vibrate on its very inmost strings.

I love the summer, with her ebb and flow
Of light and warmth and music, that have nursed
Her tender buds to blossoms; and you know
It was in summer that I saw you first.

I love the winter dearly too; but then
So much I owe it: on a winter's day,
Bleak, stormy, cold, I saw you once again,
When you had been those weary months away.

I love the stars like friends; so many nights
I gaze at them, when you are far from me,
Till I grow blind with tears: those far-off lights
Can watch you, whom I long in vain to see.

I love, too, to be loved: all loving praise
Is like a crown upon my life, to make
It better worth your interest, to raise
Still nearer to your own the heart you take.

I love all good and noble souls. I heard
One speak of you but lately; and for days,
Only to think of it, my heart was stirred
In tender memory of such generous praise.

I love all those who love you, all who owe
Comfort to you; and I can find regret
Even for those poor hearts who once could know
And once could love you, and will now forget.

Would you have loved me had you known before
I loved so many things—still you the best?
Dearest, remember that I love you more—
O more a thousand times—than all the rest!

O.

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THE ROMANCE OF PROCESS-SERVING.

It may not be generally supposed that the calling of a process-server is particularly difficult, or one that requires any great amount of skill or judgment. Such, however, is the case. Process-serving requires a good share of common-sense, judgment, and tact. It is a business, moreover, that not infrequently entails considerable danger to the person so employed. We all know the fate that befell the tax-collector—a species of process-server at least—who fell under the blows of Wat Tyler's vengeance. Happily one rarely, if ever, in these days hears of a person engaged in the service of legal process being so summarily disposed of; but that there are many instances in which one comes in for some rough handling there can be no doubt.

To say the least, process-serving is not a labour of love, and those who follow it get more kicks than kisses. The general impression that process-servers are, as a whole, a hard-hearted lot, and here I refer especially to the bailiffs employed by various courts, is an erroneous one. They are as a rule a kind-hearted body of men, and always ready to offer an unfortunate defendant any advice so far as the same is not absolutely inconsistent with their sense of duty. I know a most estimable process-server who is not only endowed with the milk of human kindness, but is withal a good man. He plays the organ and leads the choir of his church. There are instances perhaps in which their 'sympathy' has been so entirely enlisted by the impecunious debtor that the interests of the plaintiff have been for the nonce forgotten, where the 'officer' has fled from the dangerous presence without having parted company with the ill-fated document, and calmed his conscience by a species of moral hypnotism, that he and the person he 'wanted' had not yet met! How very precious time is to the needy defendant to an action at *Nisi Prius* or in the County Court can only be duly appreciated by those who have found themselves in that unfortunate position. It is the sheet-anchor on which debtors rely. In

almost every action brought in the County Court where that form of summons known as 'Default' is issued, the defendant will avail himself of the time which an all-indulgent and paternal law allows, by simply filling in, and returning to the Court, a notice that he purposes defending the action, although he may not possess the shadow of a defence. Hereby some three weeks or more of precious time will be gained; whereas if no notice of defence were given, judgment and consequent execution would issue after eight days of service of the summons.

Speaking of the experiences of process-servers recalls instances I have known of a bailiff having hot water thrown on him, and other equally forcible means adopted to compel his retirement. Another officer, by reason of his special attention to the house of a gentleman he 'wanted,' was at last set upon by the house-dog, and only managed to keep the enemy at bay through the friendly shelter of an empty water-barrel, and a substantial bludgeon which was always with him when on duty.

It is not reassuring to be told on a dark winter's evening, in an outlying country district, with no friendly assistance at hand, that 'If yer don't clear off in a brace of shakes yer'll hev a bullet in yer.' Whereupon a loud report is heard from the interior of the room as if the 'fugitive' from justice was quite ready to suit the action to the word. One gentleman who was in daily expectation of an 'execution' hit upon the happy expedient of fortifying his house and making it practically impregnable. This he effected by barricading all the lower windows and doubly barring the doors. He caused all provisions from the grocer, butcher, and baker to be lifted to the upper stories by a basket attached to a rope, and was thus able to stand a siege of considerable duration.

The writer some years ago undertook the service of a writ under peculiarly difficult circumstances. The defendant, a big brawny man, occupied a farm some twelve miles distant. It was known that he was a notoriously rough customer

to handle—in fact, a fighting man. The amount of the claim was considerably over £100; time pressed, as it had come to our knowledge that our friend was about to take a voyage to America, and had even paid his passage money. Having no intention of returning to these inhospitable shores, he did not think it necessary to say good-bye or advise his friends of his departure, believing in the axiom ‘that a still tongue makes a wise head.’ He was one of those gentlemen who could pay but who would not if he could help it. Nevertheless the secret leaked out. The night I volunteered my services was a dark and stormy one. I secured a smart cob, and, accompanied by a boy, drove through a long dark road and several narrow country lanes until I came to my tryst. Leaving the horse in charge of the boy, I had to pick my way in pitch darkness up an exceedingly narrow and rugged lane and then across a field to where the house stood. The difficulty of doing this on such a night of rain, heavily weighted by a thick mackintosh, while the darkness was so intense that one could literally not see three paces ahead, may readily be conceived. Having been guided to the door by a faint glimmer of light from one of the windows, I entered the porch and tremulously knocked, well knowing my man, sure I should only get at him by a ruse, and well aware that I should require to be pretty sharp at that. In response to my gentle knock an unmelodious voice exclaimed, ‘Who the d—’s that at this ’ere time o’ night!’ This remark was evidently meant for the wife, for she at once replied: ‘It must be some poor ’ole tramp, Bill; let ’im come in and warm himself by the fire!’ Our friend, however, was not so generously disposed towards me, for he took some minutes to consider his line of action, during which he carried on a muttered conversation with his wife. At length he came to the door, put his mouth to the keyhole, and the following dialogue ensued:

‘Who be ’ee?’

‘A poor ould tramp; wull ’ee let me come afore yer fire fer five minutes?’

Bill. ‘What do ’ee think about it, missus, noo?’

Wife. ‘Let ’un come in, Bill, poor crittur!’

Thereupon Bill delivered himself as follows:

‘Now, look ’ee ’ere, mister, if yer a-playin’ the fule with me yer ’ll be sorry for it, for as zure as yer there I ’ll break yer head!’

The prospect was not cheering, neither from the inside nor the outside. Had there been room to have put the writ under the door I would have done so in the circumstances, but there was not, and I was anxious to effect the best service. Seeing how matters stood, I divested myself of my mackintosh, placed it over my arm, and made ready to do a run for it. I had no sooner done so than my unwilling host partially opened the door as if to survey the coast. I immediately threw the writ between the door and the lintel, and started off as fast as I could. Then took place a race indeed. What with the knowledge that I was closely pursued by the man and his yelping sheep-dog, I flew like the wind. Once I fell in the slippery mud, but in an instant was on my feet again and on faster than ever. I heard my pursuer trying to make the dog ‘go’ for me. I brandished my stick as I ran, and was now within a few paces of my horse, which I presently

reached, and in a few seconds more had leaped up alongside the boy and was driving for dear life up the old turnpike road; nor did I stop until I had put some half dozen miles between myself and that very hostile defendant. Six days after the event recorded the money was paid.

One of the most striking individuals I ever knew was a man who simply had nothing to learn in the school of process-serving. He was a veritable past-master of the art. Having one day to serve a certain retired officer in the army—a gentleman who had caused much trouble to him on previous occasions by reason of his showing a marked pertinacity for keeping close to his house, and denying himself almost to every one who called—the crafty officer thereupon hit upon the expedient of disguising himself and calling on the colonel in the rôle of a brother officer. This he accomplished in the following manner: Having hired a smart well-groomed cob from a livery stable, our bailiff, scrupulously attired in smart riding breeches, coat, and silk hat, rode out a distance of some ten miles to the old colonel’s residence. Having trotted up the carriage drive, which had a very neglected appearance, as if the surroundings generally were in a bankrupt condition, our irresistible bailiff knocked with his riding whip at the principal entrance to the house, which looked untenanted and was still as death. After waiting some time, the head of a man-servant appeared at one of the upper windows and demanded the stranger’s business, whereupon the latter remarked: ‘I am Major Clyde, and as I am passing through this neighbourhood I have called to see your master, an old friend of mine. Is he at home?’ The ruse succeeded, for after the lapse of some minutes our soi-disant major heard the sound of bolts being drawn, and was presently ushered into a large dining-room which was even more gloomy than the outside of the house. Meanwhile he requested the man-servant to hold his horse as his stay would not be long. After waiting some ten minutes the unsuspecting colonel walked into the room in his dressing-gown and at once greeted as he thought his late comrade-in-arms; but the latter, not wishing to prolong an interview which must necessarily have proved perplexing even to such a hardy nature as his, at once divested himself of the fatal writ, merely explaining his unceremonious entry into the colonel’s presence by the remark that ‘all was fair in love or war,’ and then as unceremoniously departed, leaving the astonished colonel to swallow his chagrin as best he could.

A TSAR’S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XXXI.

PHILIPPOF’S was a mixed character, and comprised, together with many less worthy traits, such as obstinacy, combativeness, and an inclination to ride rough-shod over all who disagreed with him, a spice of real grandeur. Bitterly as he had resented the conduct of the Tsar in mistaking, throughout, his actions, and in punishing him with imprisonment and the ruin of his career by reason of a misunderstanding which ought never to have occurred, yet his innate loyalty

towards the head of the state had never suffered. There never had been a moment when he would have willingly injured the Emperor; not even in the bitterest hour of his undeserved disgrace and punishment. He had been, of course, aggrieved and disinclined to pay those trivial courtesies towards the Crown, such as baring his head when the Tsar passed, which custom demanded; but the kernel of his true loyalty was unimpaired.

Now, when a train of circumstances had put him in possession of the secrets of one of the many existing societies of the discontented, and of its designs upon the sovereign's life, it never once occurred to him to let things be and to refrain from interfering, since the Tsar had treated him shabbily and deserved no better at his hands.

On the contrary, now that he had got Doonya, as he believed, safe out of the jaws of the lion, Philipof was about to run any and every kind of risk in order to warn the Emperor of the dangers that threatened him; and this not with the idea of enjoying a magnificent revenge, but simply as a matter of course that admitted neither of consideration or discussion. Philipof was, nevertheless, well aware of the risk he ran, and acted as carefully as circumstances permitted.

For three whole days he waited about outside the private entrance to the Winter Palace in hopes of seeing the Tsar in the act of mounting his droshka for his daily drive. But though he did, indeed, see the Tsar and endeavoured to approach him, he was not permitted. Then Sasha grew desperate, and reported himself—as he was still obliged to do periodically—at the police-office of his district; and here he asked for a private word with the pristaf.

'Well,' said that official, who was, of course, acquainted with Philipof and his story, and disbelieved, or pretended to disbelieve, it—'Well, what is it?'

'I have a matter of extreme importance to communicate,' said Sasha, angry with the man's manner, but determined to remain cool under provocation, for the sake of the cause he had in hand.

'Proceed, then,' said the pristaf. 'Speak; I shall not prevent you.'

'My tale is for one ear only,' explained Sasha.

'And whose ear is that?'

'His Majesty's,' said Sasha simply.

The pristaf laughed heartily. 'Come, come, my fine fellow,' he said; 'don't waste my time with your nonsense. What is it you want?'

'I have told you what I want,' said Philipof. 'I have a secret for his Majesty's ear only.'

'Very well, then, go to his Majesty and tell him. You know the Winter Palace? All you have to do is to go there and request an interview. So eminent a gentleman as yourself may be assured of securing a private audience.'

'Are you serious? Shall I be permitted to see him?' asked Sasha.

'My good man,' said the pristaf, 'you have as much chance of obtaining access to the Tsar as a fly on the wrong side of the pane of glass has of getting at its friends within. You had better confide in me.'

'That is impossible,' said Sasha shortly; and so ended his second attempt.

And presently the very day of the gala entertainment at the theatre had come round, and the Tsar was still unwarned. Sasha had hung about the Winter Palace until the suspicions of the palace-guards had been aroused, and he was taken within the building and searched.

He carried nothing more compromising than a note-book, however, filled with memoranda which concerned his business on the grain wharf, and was soon released; but the Emperor was still in ignorance of the mine that was in preparation to explode at his feet.

Meanwhile this was the night of the grand gala performance at the Opera. Patti was to sing—the young prima donna who had taken Europe and America by storm—and the theatre would be packed as full as it could hold in spite of its gigantic size.

The state box was brilliant with Grand Dukes and ministers—a gorgeous array of smart uniforms; every box of the five tiers was crowded with opera-lovers anxious to hear the beautiful and gifted *diva* in one of her most fascinating parts—the *Pardon de Ploermel*. The Emperor was to arrive later, and would occupy the private imperial box close to the stage; but, by his Majesty's own special request, the opera would not be delayed for him. It was a brilliant spectacle, and the music was never so divinely interpreted; yet there were some present whose eyes beheld nothing in this scene of brilliance and splendour, and whose ears heard not a single note of the music, but whose hearts beat within their bodies with the sound of doom, and whose hands clutched the weapons concealed within their clothing as a drowning man clutches a straw. Three such men were there, and one woman, distributed at different points of vantage: one beneath the private box, one close to the state box, one in the corridor outside, and one at the grand entrance.

The theatre had filled and the opera began. The singers glanced furtively and frequently at the Tsar's box, close to the stage; they regretted each brilliant effort which they had been obliged to make before his appearance as an effort wasted; but still he did not come.

It was half-an-hour after the time fixed for the commencement of the opera when his Majesty at length issued from the little side-door of the Winter Palace and seated himself in the droshka drawn up in readiness to convey him to the *Bolshoi Theatre*. Two aides-de-camp came quickly out into the street after him, and jumping into their droshka, were whirled after their master at the usual break-neck speed of the Russian trotter.

Down the quay the party drove, and turned into the Plain of St Isaac, just where the splendid statue of Peter the Great stands. Past the grand cathedral, with its wonderful granite steps and columns, the gorgeously attired little procession flew along, and into the great Morskaya, and straight down that fine thoroughfare to the end of it, where the canal is crossed by the *Tsalooyeff Most*, or 'kissing bridge.' This point lies about a couple of hundred yards from the Grand Theatre, at the imperial entrance of which stood waiting, amid a crowd of spectators, shivering all over at intervals, and cursing the cruel fate which had led him into an enterprise which he hated, the first of the wretches appointed as 'executive members.' Another two minutes and this man must raise his arm to slay the Lord's anointed, unless he would feel the dagger of a fellow-revolutionist in his own bosom; for each of the executive was 'supported,' for this very purpose, by two friends whose instructions were very plain and simple. If the executioner missed his opportunity to carry out the job for which he had been commissioned, these supporters would not miss theirs.

Another two minutes, or less, and the great White Tsar would be stretched bleeding and helpless—more helpless than the least of his living subjects, with his life-work but half accomplished, his sins but half sinned, his good deeds but half done! Another two minutes, and the history of Europe would have been written very differently; a second Nicholas would have reigned instead of a third Alexander, for the Prince Imperial was not yet dead! Another two minutes! . . .

Then on the slope of the Kissing Bridge a wild figure ran forth from among the spectators on the pavement, and threw itself before the very hoofs of the horse of his Majesty, which knocked him down and stamped upon him, and broke a bone or two in the process, but did not, for all that, loosen the firm grip the man had taken of the reins on both sides of its foaming mouth. The droshka pulled up instantly, the Tsar springing out almost before the wheels had stopped; the crowds surged up and around in a moment; the aides-de-camp were upon the spot almost as quickly as the Tsar himself.

'What madman is this?' cried Dostoev. 'Be calm, your Majesty; 'tis but an accident.'

'Is the poor fellow hurt?' asked Alexander II.

'Not much, sire,' said the sufferer himself, still holding on tightly to the horse's mouth.

'Good God, your Majesty,' exclaimed Dostoev, 'it is Philipof again!'

'Stop!' said the Tsar. 'Your name, sir?'

'Philipof, late of the Okhotsk, late also of the fortress-prison,' added Sasha foolishly.

'So. And the meaning of this, sir, quickly please?'

'The meaning is, your Majesty,' said Sasha, wincing as the horse plunged about and twisted his broken shin-bone—'the meaning is that your servants would afford me no other way of approaching you, and it is absolutely necessary to warn you of a certain danger to your person.'

'Dostoev,' said the Tsar, 'assist the police in keeping the people to the pavement; you too,

Dolgorouki and Orlof. I wish to speak privately with this gentleman.'

'For heaven's sake, be careful, sire!' said Dostoev.

The Tsar glanced angrily at his aide-de-camp, but said nothing. He stepped close to Philipof, however, and graciously bade him speak.

Sasha explained, in a very few words, that the Grand Theatre was at this moment the rendez-vous of deadly conspirators, and that in entering the building the Tsar would, in all human probability, be going to his doom. 'For God's sake, turn back, sire, and do not attend the opera to-night!' he ended.

Alexander stood a moment in deep thought.

'And how do you come to know of this?' he asked.

Sasha explained that he had accidentally befriended a woman who had been selected as one of the chief actors in the projected tragedy, but who had chosen suicide rather than obedience to the bloody mandate of the society to which she belonged.

'Holy mother of the Lord!' said Alexander, crossing himself devoutly. 'And where is this woman—dead?'

'She is sought by the police, sire,' said Sasha, blushing.

'Man, you shall show me this woman, and I will bless her with my hands,' said the Tsar with emotion. 'As for you, Philipof, it is in my mind that you have been treated like a dog from beginning to end. Why have you exerted yourself to do me this service?'

'I am no conspirator, your Majesty; I have no sympathy with murderers and assassins, though I may have my own grievance.'

'And have you any proof of this frightful story of the theatre? I think that I believe you without it; but it would not become me to act upon every breath of warning that cowards or madmen supply. My court is full of the former; and how do I know that you yourself are not of the latter?'

'Send down to the Grand Theatre and arrest—no, they may be unwilling victims, just as my friend was. Promise to spare their lives, sire, and punish only those who have betrayed them!'

'I promise it. Let me know, if you can, where the conspirators are placed. They shall be searched on leaving the theatre. Do not fear; I shall be merciful to the victims, though not to those who have sacrificed them.'

Philipof described accurately the row of stalls in which the armed conspirators were placed, and gave also the position, as nearly as he could, of those who stood and waited in corridor and entrance-hall.

'Philipof,' said the Tsar with emotion, 'I presuppose your innocence of all you have been accused of, and I ask you to forgive me. Thank you; I see that you do so. Now I shall embrace you before the people, and later they shall learn that Alexander knows how to reward a faithful servant.'

With these words the Tsar took Philipof in his arms and kissed him three times, to the great wonder of all who saw, but who had not heard the discussion; and from that day to this the little bridge on which Tsar and servant were

reunited, after years of misunderstanding, has been known as the Kissing Bridge.

After which Alexander II. helped the limping Philipof into his own droschka, and drove away rapidly with him towards the palace.

NICKEL AND COBALT.

By T. L. PHIPSON.

OF all the metals hitherto discovered there are none more interesting from certain points of view than nickel and cobalt. There is a scientific mystery surrounding them that has never been solved, and is not likely to be explained for many years to come. Although they possess very distinct properties, and form salts of very different colours, they have exactly the same combining number (29.5); and this number approaches that of iron (28), the commonest metal, with the exception, perhaps, of aluminium, that exists in the crust of the earth. They are also, like iron, attracted by the magnet.

Moreover, they are invariably present in those masses of metal called *meteoric iron*, or *aerolites*, which occasionally fall from the skies upon the surface of our earth. The fall of these aerolites generally occurs in broad daylight, when the sky is clear and the sun shining brightly. A stream of cloud, or metallic vapour, appears in the air, and a noise like the loudest thunder is heard after the whizzing of the aerolite, constituting one of the most terrifying phenomena it is possible to behold.

It is not yet known whence these iron masses come. They have been seen to fall upon the earth from the most remote periods of antiquity up to the present time; mention is made of them by the oldest Greek and Latin authors. Some writers suppose them to be shot out of volcanoes in the moon, others think that they come from the sun. Among modern authors we find it suggested that meteoric iron may be launched from volcanoes on the earth; some believe that aerolites form a circle round the globe like the ring of the planet Saturn, fragments of which, from time to time, fall to the earth's surface; and many profess that they are minute planetary bodies which revolve in elliptic orbits around the sun, and that, when our planet happens to approach near to these orbits, metallic fragments varying in size from the dimensions of a hazel-nut to those of a wheelbarrow or a cart are suddenly attracted to the earth and fall through the atmosphere with the terrific phenomena already mentioned.

Fortunately such events are very rare; but it has been computed that at least one of such falls occurs every year upon some part of the globe. When one of these pieces of iron is picked up, or dug up (for they are generally forced to a certain depth into the soil by the velocity of their fall), it is always possible to discover that it is a piece of meteoric iron, even when it has not been seen to fall; for, on being

submitted to analysis, it is invariably found to contain nickel, the amount of which may vary from about one to ten per cent.; but whatever the proportion, it is always there, and is never found in any other kind of iron.

The discovery of the metal nickel was made in a very curious manner. In the numerous mines of copper worked for ages past in various parts of Germany and Bohemia, a heavy mineral of a reddish-brown colour, somewhat like that of copper, is frequently met with; and the old miners were much disappointed when they came upon it, for they knew by bitter experience that it yielded no copper, and they were obliged to throw it away as waste. Hence they gave it the name of *kupfer-nickel* or 'false copper.' It was an old Swedish chemist, named Hjerne, who first described this disappointing mineral in a book on the *Art of detecting Metals*, which he published in 1694. But long after this it was generally considered to be an ore of copper, but an ore which no one knew how to treat in order to get the copper out of it. The fact is that, in spite of its fine coppery appearance, this kupfer-nickel contains no copper at all. It was reserved for Cronstedt, an eminent Swedish mineralogist, to discover, in 1751, that it contained a new metal, to which he gave the name of nickel. And a most interesting metal it has proved, destined not very long after its discovery to give rise to the important trade in German silver which has employed and still employs thousands of hands and millions of money. The 'false copper' was found to consist of this new metal nickel and of arsenic in nearly equal proportions.

In the days of Cronstedt analytical chemistry was not so far advanced as at present, so that it is not astonishing to find that two well-known French chemists, Professor Sage and M. Monnet, denied that kupfer-nickel contained any new metal; and they openly asserted that it consisted only of ordinary substances that could be perfectly well separated by proper methods. This denial aroused the curiosity of another Swedish chemist, the illustrious Bergman, from whom the great Berzelius derived much of his chemical knowledge, to examine this kupfer-nickel with the greatest care. This was done in the year 1775. He successfully refuted the assertions of the French chemists, and confirmed in every respect the views of Cronstedt. Moreover, he first obtained the new metal nickel in a comparatively pure state, and described its curious properties, its white colour, its hardness, its difficult fusion, its magnetic attraction, and its beautiful green salts. It then attracted a great deal of attention, and many treatises were written upon it, one of the best and most exhaustive being that of the German physicist, Richter, in 1804.

Such is the brief history of the discovery of

nickel, which is very similar to that of cobalt. This was achieved by another Swedish chemist, Brandt, in 1733. Here also the new metal was extracted from a mineral called 'Kobalt'—an 'evil spirit' of the German miners—a gray metallic, heavy mineral, that was very annoying to the miners when met with in their copper lodes, as, in spite of its great weight and metal-like appearance, it yielded no copper, nor anything else. Here, again, the celebrated Bergman, in 1780, confirmed and extended Brandt's discovery, and this new metal cobalt finally came into prominence by the large number of investigations to which it gave rise. As in the case of nickel, the ore was found to consist of cobalt and arsenic. Ever since the fifteenth century, however, this ore of cobalt had been used in different parts of Europe to give glass and porcelain a beautiful blue colour which has never been surpassed. These two metals usually accompany each other in the mines; in some lodes the nickel predominates, in others the cobalt, and the ores are separated and treated accordingly.

Iron, nickel, and cobalt are the only three metals that can be converted into magnetic needles such as that used in the mariner's compass. Of these, iron appears to be the best suited for this purpose, and if either of the other two contains any admixture of arsenic its magnetic property disappears entirely. When pure, both nickel and cobalt will form horseshoe magnets little inferior to those of steel. The complete separation of nickel and cobalt has always been looked upon as a very difficult process, on account of the similarity of their properties, and a great number of more or less complicated methods have been described for this purpose; but the writer showed some years ago that it can be accomplished with ease by means of a salt called xanthate of potash. The process would be too expensive, perhaps, on the large scale, but it is excellent in the laboratory.

Some time back a new ore of nickel, a silicate of nickel and magnesium, was found in New Caledonia, and latterly the same ore has been discovered in Canada. It is called *Garnierite*, from the name of its discoverer, and is now actively worked as an important source of this valuable metal which is now being used with great effect, combined with the steel, to harden the armour plates for warships.

For ages past the Chinese have produced an alloy of copper and nickel, called in their language 'white copper,' the exportation of which was always strictly forbidden, and its process of manufacture kept secret. A curious property of this alloy is that when a small bar of it is suspended by a string and struck with the finger, the sound emitted can be heard for more than a thousand yards. By some means a specimen of this curious compound metal was obtained by a Scotch chemist, the late Dr Fyfe, Professor at Aberdeen, who made an analysis of it, showing that it contained more than half its weight of copper, a large amount of nickel, with some zinc, and a very little iron. The Chinese evidently obtained it by smelting together a mixture of copper ore and nickel ore. The same practice was put in operation in Germany, and gradually led up to the pro-

duction of 'German silver,' which is now a very important branch of metallurgy.

There are many kinds of German silver—which the Germans themselves still call *Chinasilber*—but they all contain rather more than half their weight of copper and about a quarter of their weight of nickel with the same amount of zinc. The eminent chemist Pelouze, when Master of the Mint at Paris, found that if the latter metal is omitted entirely the product is much finer, but far more expensive. Many inferior kinds are made for the commoner purposes. The best kind takes a high polish, and tarnishes less readily than silver; it is a white metal with a shade of blue. It contains eight parts of copper to four parts of nickel and three and a half parts of zinc. But probably all has not yet been done in this direction; an alloy of this kind is known which contains fifteen per cent. of nickel, and is remarkable for its malleability and whiteness. It may be drawn into wires or rolled into sheets of any thickness, and is well adapted for ornamental work of every description.

Nickel is difficult to obtain in a perfectly pure state, and the metal as found in commerce sometimes contains less than sixty and seldom more than eighty-eight per cent. of pure metal. Of late years absolutely pure nickel has been successfully deposited from its solutions by means of electricity, and is now largely used in electro-plating.

The metal cobalt is not put to any use at present; the beautiful blue colour (cobalt blue, or smalt) which we all know so well, was long ago discovered by calcining cobalt ore with sand (silica). It is a *silicate of cobalt*, extensively used for colouring glass and porcelain, for tinting newly-washed linen by being mixed with the starch, for the preparation of artists' colours, for destroying or effacing the yellow colour of writing paper, &c. The salts of cobalt possess a curious property; in solution they are a beautiful pink, but when dried up and quite devoid of water they are blue. The little 'weather prophets' sold in the shops, representing the figure of a young lady, the skirt of whose dress turns pink or blue according as the weather is going to be wet or dry, are made by soaking the material of the skirt in the solution of a salt of cobalt.

About the latter end of the last century people used to amuse themselves by writing with what was called 'sympathetic ink.' This was a dilute solution of chloride of cobalt; the writing disappears when cold, but returns with a greenish tint every time it is warmed. The writer recollects an old professor of chemistry showing him a landscape drawn in ordinary ink which represented a dismal winter scene; but when placed before the fire and heated, the leaves of the trees and the grass all turned green, and it then represented a bright picture of summer. This little artifice appears to have been known as early as the days of Paracelsus, and is realised by painting over the leaves and grass with a weak solution of chloride of cobalt. In olden times this pink solution used to be obtained by heating cobalt ore with *aqua regia*, long before the metal cobalt was discovered.

To give some idea of the intensity of the

rich blue colour given by cobalt, we should state that pure white glass is coloured blue by the addition of one-thousandth part of oxide of cobalt, and that as little as one twenty-thousandth part will impart a perceptible azure tint.

For a long time it has been thought that the beautiful blue tint of the ancient Roman tessellated pavement was due to oxide of cobalt, and though this has been doubted, because cobalt is said never to have been detected in them, yet we have just seen how extremely small a quantity will suffice to produce this colour, and its detection in ancient glass and enamelled tiles is no easy matter. Though some of these blue tints may perhaps have been obtained from iron and copper ores, there is great probability that many of the finest of them were really got with cobalt ore. Such, for instance, are the blue enamelled figures of Egyptian deities in the Dresden Gallery, and the blue ornaments found on some mummies, which after so many centuries have lost nothing of their brilliancy. The ancient Chinese gave to their porcelain the same fine blue colour long before cobalt ores or the art of preparing smalt became known in Europe. The blue colour of the beautiful Portland Vase is positively known to be due to cobalt. This ancient Roman cinerary urn of transparent dark blue glass, about ten inches high, was long in the possession of the Barberini family in Italy. It was purchased in 1770 for a thousand guineas by Sir William Hamilton, British Ambassador at Naples, and came afterwards into the possession of the Duchess of Portland. In 1810 the Duke of Portland, one of the trustees of the British Museum, allowed it to be placed there for exhibition; but in 1845 a man named William Lloyd smashed it to pieces. It has since been most carefully repaired, but is now no longer exhibited to the public.

O'ER SEA AND LAND.

CHAPTER III.

ERNEST MANNERING was no coward. Yet the next half-hour was one of which the remembrance has never faded. To his nerves, shaken by the recent catastrophe, there was a horror in the deep chalk cutting, through which he rushed with a speed born of the assurance that slowly he could not go at all; and a nightmare-like oppression in the succeeding run over slippery shingle and yielding sand that seemed to do their utmost to impede his progress. But he reached the place at last.

About twenty minutes later a number of artisans, accompanied by one or two gentlemen, and guided by the man whose cowardly assault had sent Jehan to his doom, came within sight of Ernest, still kneeling beside the motionless figure. He had been using every effort to restore some sort of animation to the frame which lay so helplessly prone. Hoping against hope, he had poured salt water over the rigid features, and endeavoured to raise the head

which, though apparently uninjured, hung backwards in a horrible manner whenever any movement upon his own part deprived it of support. He had chafed the cold hands and covered the stiffening body with his own coat. But so far all exertions had resulted in nothing. With a sigh he looked up as the newcomers approached, and asked sadly, 'Have you brought a doctor?'

There were two or three, who hastily came to his relief, making such short, brief examination as the circumstances permitted. Only, however, at last to confirm the fears which Ernest had felt.

'The man is quite dead. The spine is broken, Mr Mayor,' the eldest of the trio announced, addressing him who had done the fearful deed. But the man showed no symptom of guilt or remorse now. His manner was calm and collected, far more so than that of Mannering, as he turned authoritatively to a policeman who formed one of the party.

'Take that man into custody,' he ordered, pointing to Ernest. 'As I told you, gentlemen,' addressing the physicians, who had risen to their feet by this time, 'I witnessed the whole affair. I beheld the unfortunate wretch thrown from the path above by this person.'

'What?' burst from Mannering's lips. 'Hands off,' to the constable. 'You say that it was I—I who pushed that poor creature over?'

The Mayor nodded. 'Certainly,' he said. 'Jennings, do your duty.'

But Mannering, already shaken and unnerved, could not for the moment steady himself under the shock of such an accusation. The mist had, although he had not until this moment been conscious of the fact, cleared off, in the sudden, unaccountable fashion that sea-fogs do frequently vanish, and the moon was shining down brilliantly upon the group. Its beams fell full upon the livid features of the dead, lighting up also Ernest's pale face, and revealing to him the attitude of the people around him, who were regarding him with mingled horror and curiosity. Only his accuser was standing back in the shadow.

'But it was you,' he exclaimed, '*you* who did it. Not I! Why should I? I never saw him before in my life. Until to-night I was ignorant that such a person as Jehan'—

'At least you are acquainted with his name,' remarked the Mayor drily, taking prompt advantage of the incautious admission. And the policeman added 'You'd better say nothing. It'll all tell again' yer by-and-by.' Which, after the mistake he had just made, seemed to poor Ernest only the truth. Yet the charge was too ridiculous, surely, to stand for a moment in the light of inquiry.

However, he went now, without further resistance, in the direction that his captors indicated, the feeling still strongly upon him that he must be walking in some strange, uncanny dream. Out

of the chaos of his ideas he could bring no sort of order, the only notion that occurred persistently being that he must see Ellis and that at once. If any man could help him—not but what help would be easy enough—that man was Ellis.

But they were conveying him to Upton jail. And by the time that that dismal abode was reached the hour was almost midnight and quite too late for an interview. The moments of darkness had to be endured as best they might. And not until Dick, in response to a hurried line scrawled upon one of Ernest's visiting-cards, came to him the next morning did much comfort accrue. Then, however, the mere sight of Richard's familiar face and the sound of Tomkins's well-known voice went far to clear his brain. He was able to meet them with sufficient calmness, assisted thereto by the fact that the policeman who had carried his note had already given to his friends the outline of the tale, and they accordingly arrived prepared to be as righteously indignant as even Mannering could desire.

'Tell all about the affair, old chap. Spit it out! Best thing,' was Dick's prescription. 'Chums'll see you through. Friend Ford, the Mayor, mixed up, bobby says.'

Whereupon Ernest proceeded to give the whole story, from the moment when he first distinguished the voices upon the cliff to the instant of Ford's almost passionate appeal to him as a witness, and so on to the present hour. His audience of two listened with scarcely a word until, when he had reached a conclusion, Tomkins asked a question:

'Do you think he *meant* to kill the fellow?' he said.

'I really can't tell you,' was the reply, after a thoughtful pause. 'Any sane man must have foreseen the result of a blow. But Ford was madly angry. Yet his words, "You shall never tell," and his treatment of me'—

'Look fishy. Verdict manslaughter though, not murder,' pronounced Ellis. 'Beast, any way.'

'That he is,' from Ernest, with conviction. 'And here's Katie's birthday only a fortnight off,' he wound up. 'Oh, you don't know about Katie; to Tomkins, but Dick can tell you. For months and months I've been as cautious as—as an owl,' with his usual beautiful aptitude for metaphor. 'And now'—

'Oh, keep up pecker! Never say die. Don't cave in like this,' were Ellis's blurted out attempts at consolation. 'Be brought before magistrates to-morrow. Inquest Tuesday too. All come out. Shall wire for Caxton down from town. Better be at inquest. Couldn't have cleverer counsel.'

'Besides, haven't you business with Ford in the morning, Ellis?' suggested Tomkins. 'You might see if anything could be made out of the worthy then.' At which proposition, however, though he said nothing, Ellis shook his head.

'Anyhow it's a horrible charge,' exclaimed Ernest despondently. 'To think I'd never seen the unfortunate chap in my life before, and yet to be accused of murdering him! What will Katie say? As to Mr Denovan'—

And, indeed, the effect which the charge might have upon those two minds was the main topic of Mannering's meditations during the rest of that weary Sunday. Knowing the vicar's prejudices

as he did, he could not but fear that Mr Denovan was likely to regard the affair with no merciful eyes—even, perhaps, with scant justice. Of course he himself would be set at liberty upon the morrow. But would the taint of a prison and his connection with that bugbear of the clergyman's soul—a row, not alone be sufficient to bar against him the door of Katie's home? Over and over again he assured himself that the idea of such ridiculous unreasonableness was quite libellous. And as often did the same notion recur, with added force, ten minutes later. But of any more tangible obstacle than the vicar's opposition Ernest did not as yet seriously dream.

Ellis, however, was not without grave doubts as to what the finding of the coroner's jury might prove to be. As Mannering had very truly remarked in the course of their discussion, 'In little potty holes like this the natives stick by each other like—like oysters. The jury will declare it murder, and the magistrate will follow suit. Between the lot I shall be squashed.' Now, Ernest, though he said it, did not in the least believe it. But Dick was not so certain.

As to the business meeting which had been the originating cause of all the woe, that was clearly impracticable now. It would never do for the solicitor for the defence to be seeking private interviews with the witness for the prosecution, especially when that witness had already displayed such powers of fabricating evidence. Therefore must that opportunity for diplomacy be relinquished. And it was not until the prisoner was brought into court for examination that Ford and Ellis met face to face.

Unhappily for Ernest, the result of that examination did nothing to relieve his anxieties. Formal testimony alone was taken. The Mayor swore without flinching that he had unwittingly disturbed the prisoner and the unknown dead man whilst engaged in heated dispute, and regretted that he had been just too late to prevent the crime. No trace of hesitation or of nervousness did he display, unless the continual twisting of his signet-ring could be construed as a symptom of such. And Ernest listened to this strange perversion of the truth with an almost bursting heart. Then he found himself remanded, still in custody, for a week—in other words, until after the opening of the inquest—bail being decisively refused.

Just a short conversation was that afterwards held between lawyer and client, Ernest and his *fidus Achates*. Only one idea seemed to possess the lover, and he could talk of little else.

'It will be in all the papers to-night, Dick. For Heaven's sake go and tell Katie before she sees it in print!'

'Of course, of course. There, old chap, there,' soothing his friend with almost womanly tenderness. Ernest indeed was perturbed and disappointed beyond expression by a mode of procedure which he had never anticipated. 'Splendid counsel Caxton. Rely on his 'cuteness. First-class at cross-examination. Be down to-morrow.'

But Ernest was intent upon other things.

'Old Denovan won't listen to a word of sense,' he assured his envoy miserably. 'He's certain to take the very blackest view of things. Don't let him poison her mind, Dick, even if he's set on believing the worst himself.'

Nor did events fail to prove the prophecy and the warning to be both sufficiently correct. When Ellis arrived at the vicarage and, in the position of ambassador, unfolded his news, Katie's guardian showed inexorable bitterness.

'I have had my doubts for some time, ever since, indeed, I found where and in what society—you must pardon my plainness of speech, sir, if you are yourself a member of that club—Mr Mannering passed his time. Now my fears are realised but too fully.'

'Done nothing wrong,' declared Ellis, who, in spite of previous notice, was decidedly astounded at the clergyman's flinty aspect. As to Katie, he dared scarcely look at her. One glance, indeed, he had given, during the recital of the tale, at her white, frightened face. But he had not yet ventured upon a second. 'All lies—old Ford's lies. Desperate rough to round upon him like this. See?'

The vicar, who preferred that plainness of speech should be confined strictly to himself, drew up his fine figure stiffly.

'I am the best judge of my own actions. And I stand besides in *loco parentis*, sir, to one very dear to me. I shall be obliged to you if you will convey to Mr Mannering the expression of my desire in future to have no further dealings with a—a—gentleman whose name has been mixed up with such an outrage. Even if acquitted there is always a stigma—always a stigma.'

At this point, however, there occurred an interruption. To allow, in silence, that her own imprisoned Ernest should be pained by a message of this sort; to see, without protest, her whole hopes of happiness in life thus shattered, was meekness beyond Katie's power to display.

'Uncle,' she said—and as she spoke she went bravely up to Ellis's side, as though recognising in him Ernest's champion—'Uncle, you can, of course, prevent us from seeing each other. But that would be useless and unkind too, wouldn't it, when we shall go on loving each other all through, for ever and ever and ever?'

Not even her pleading, however, availed. The decree had gone forth, and the vicar would abide by it. Ellis quitted the vicarage with Mannering's dismissal as Mr Denovan's ultimatum. But he carried away too a word from Katie.

'I shan't say I trust him, because that would be an insult,' she said, with a little lifting of her head that Ellis thought the most fascinating thing he had seen for a long while. 'He knows I could not doubt him. But tell him, please, that I love him more and more every hour.'

FLANNELETTE.

In the history of modern trade it may be safely said that no textile article has in so short a time become so widely known and used as Flannelette. The name is now a household word, though fifteen years ago it was almost unknown; to-day the article is in use in almost every household in the kingdom, and it is shipped in large quantities to all parts of the world.

Lawsuits have been fought over the name; chambers of commerce have passed numerous resolutions concerning it; and newspaper corre-

spondents have waged mimic warfare about it. In fact the great opposition it received from rival industries served, in the early stages of its growth, as its best advertisement. Now it needs no advertising; its worth has recommended it to all housewives; and there is little question that, though of rapid growth, the trade has become a permanent one.

Thanks to rival industries, every one knows that flannelettes contain no wool, but the public are still mainly ignorant as to what constitutes a flannelette. Flannelette (or flannellette) is made from the best quality long-staple American cotton; and, with the exception of the superior quality of the material, there is nothing to distinguish a piece of flannelette from any ordinary sort of cotton cloth when it leaves the loom. It is in the further process of manipulation that the special character is given to it. It will therefore be needless to follow the weaving processes, because that deals with another branch of the subject.

After leaving the weaver, whether it is to be a fancy stripe for dress or tennis wear, a homely domestic pattern, or gray cloth for dyeing and printing fancy colours and designs, all must first go to the raising room, to undergo the process of raising; and it is here that the special character is given to the cloth that makes it a flannelette.

At one time hundreds of acres of land in England were devoted to the cultivation of the teasel plant, which will no doubt be familiar to most readers. These were used in the woollen mills, for the purpose of putting a nap or pile on cloth; and to the present day certain classes of woollen cloths can only be raised on a teasel-gig, which consists of a framework round which the teasels are tightly fixed. The machine when used is set in motion, and the cloth required to be raised travels over the machine, the needle-points of the teasel scratching the surface of the cloth as the machine revolves.

It will easily be seen that this was an expensive and cumbrous process, and at last the mechanical teasel, or raising-machine, was invented, which consisted of large cylinders round which were fixed, by means of a leather or gutta-percha base, vast numbers of needle-points, technically known as cards. These are set revolving at a great speed against the fibre of the cloth as it travels over the machine, raising a long nap or pile on the surface. With this machine it became possible to raise cotton goods; but, owing to the construction of the machine, only strong, heavy cloths could be raised, and the trade was confined to lambskins, moleskins, and similar heavy makes of cloth.

In December 1884, Mr Edward Moser of Bonn-on-the-Rhine patented in England and other countries an entirely new principle for raising-machines. The old teasel-gigs and the later raising-machines obtained their effect by working directly against the cloth, literally combing the surface to raise the nap, thus tending to weaken the cloth, and making it impossible to raise any but the strongest heavy makes.

In place of one, two, or three large carded cylinders revolving in the opposite direction to that in which the cloth travelled, the new machine contained fourteen carded rollers of

small diameter, revolving at a very high rate of speed round a central drum moving in the same direction as the cloth. The cloth in travelling over the machine is brought into only slight contact with the cards, and is gently brushed or whipped to produce the nap, instead of dragged as in the old process.

The result is that all classes of cloth can be manipulated on the machines without damage to the texture; indeed, owing to the felting process that the threads undergo, it may be said that the cloth is almost as strong when raised as when it leaves the loom.

It is interesting to note that the flocks or waste made by the machines in raising, which ten years ago were burned in the boiler-fires as useless, are now a considerable source of revenue to the manufacturer, being used for filling cushions, mixing with woollen flocks for bedding, upholstery, and numerous other purposes.

It is, then, to the introduction of the Moser machine that we may attribute the commencement of the great flannelette industry.

When the trade began to develop in 1886 the necessity arose for a general trade-name for the article, as the inconvenience of each manufacturer calling it by a different name is obvious; without any private arrangement, but by general usage, the word 'Flannelette' was chosen as most descriptive; and the name at once took the popular fancy.

No doubt the word was used by some in the first instance to convey the idea that flannelette was made partly from wool, and to further this idea fancy flannel designs were imitated. But this did not last long; flannelette soon took a stand of its own; and in beauty of colouring and variety of design has surpassed its rival.

When first brought into popular notice, the trade was entirely in the hands of a few manufacturers who had faith in its capabilities. Most of them looked upon it as being only a passing fashion, and hesitated to embark capital in machinery for its manufacture. The wisdom of the few, however, has been proved; prejudice has had to give way to facts, and at the present time the trade finds employment for thousands of workpeople. Not only has it given an impetus to the weaving trade, but a great number of the Lancashire dyers and printers are employed almost entirely in its production.

In going through a flannelette factory the visitor is astonished to see the number of processes each piece of cloth undergoes, the great value of the machinery employed, and the number of workmen through whose hands the cloth passes before it is ready for the public.

After leaving the loom, it begins its progress as a flannelette in the raising-room. This is a long, lofty room filled with machinery. In this room none of the overhead shafting and pulleys commonly to be seen in a mill are in use—all the machines are driven from beneath the flooring; the power is derived from a Tangye engine in an adjoining room, and is transmitted to the machines by means of rope-driving beneath the floor, thus reducing the vibration of the atmosphere, and allowing the fluff to fall underneath the machines, instead of rising into the air and entering the lungs of the workers.

In this room are a dozen or more machines,

each costing over three hundred pounds; the room is fireproof, and, as an additional precaution, beside each machine is a hose-pipe, with instantaneous attachment in case of fire. These precautions save the owner some fifty per cent. upon his insurance premiums.

All sorts and qualities of cloth are being raised, and it is very interesting to watch the changes they undergo as they pass through the machines time after time, until they are raised sufficiently. When raised, the cloth is passed into an adjoining room, where it is stitched one piece to another, forming what may be called ropes of cloth many miles in length; from this room the cloth travels by mechanical means to the bleach-house, or croft, as it is still called.

Here the cloth is deluged with clean water, next squeezed between enormous wooden rollers; then it is passed into large kiers, or kettles, shut up, and boiled with steam at high pressure for hours, taken out, and washed with water again. Afterwards it is treated with bleaching agents, then with more water again, and so on for several days, until at last, when it finally leaves the bleach-house, it is as white as the driven snow.

From the bleach-house the cloth is next taken to the dye-house to be dyed; and here we see—in place of the spotless cleanness of the bleach-house—colour everywhere. The floors are running with colour, the hands and clothing of the workmen are stained with it, and if the spectator is a stranger to the process of modern dyeing, his eyes are bewildered with the amazing variety and beauty of the colours of the cloth lying about in all directions.

The machines used for dyeing cloth, which are of a very simple character compared to those used for most of the other operations, are called jigs, and the cloth dyers are known as jiggers. When the cloth has gone through the jigs the requisite number of times to produce the shade required, it is pressed by rollers, to discharge as much of the superfluous moisture as possible, and then dried by the process of passing over a number of copper cylinders, heated by steam.

If it should be desired that the cloth, when dried, is to be finished off as a dyed flannelette, it is sent back to the raising-room, to be again raised, for the purpose of straightening the nap, which has been disarranged by the many processes it has undergone, and then it is passed on to the making-up room.

We have now followed the cloth in its various stages—through the raising-room, bleach-croft, and dye-house. If the dyed cloth is to be printed, we must follow it a stage farther to the printing-room; but before doing so, let us visit the colour-shop and the copper store-room. The work of the occupants of the first room is important and indispensable to the beautiful art of cloth-printing, for here it is that all the chemicals and colours are mixed ready for the use of the printers. Adjoining this room is the laboratory, where the chemist tests his colours and checks the quality and strength of all chemicals supplied to the works.

In the copper store-room, stacks upon stacks of copper rollers are ranged in long lines, like rows of artillery. Each roller will weigh over a hundredweight; and when we consider that the cost of engraving a roller varies from thirty

shillings to twelve pounds, exclusive of the artist's charge for drawing the design, and that for the flannelette trade alone some hundreds of rollers are required, it will be seen that a small fortune has to be sunk in copper alone.

Although the local exhibitions have made calico-printing machinery familiar to many, we may say that the design to be printed is sunk on the copper, not raised, as in letterpress printing. By an arrangement of revolving brushes, the colour is applied to the copper roller, which revolves against a set of sharp knives, technically called 'doctors.' These knives scrape all colour from the copper, except in the sunken part, the roller passes against the cloth to be printed as it moves over a padded drum, and the design engraved upon the copper is impressed on the cloth; the colour is dried, as the cloth travels over the machine, by means of hot air or cylinders heated by steam. Then, after leaving the printing machine, it passes through several chemical processes which serve to fix and intensify the colour. Printing-machines vary in price according to the number of colours that may be printed at one operation, from a comparatively simple single-colour machine to one that will print sixteen colours, which is a marvel of the machinist's art.

From the printing-room the cloth finds its way to the making-up room. The stripe that has been raised and finished only, the dyed cloth that has come from the dye-house, and the print that has been through every process, meet on common ground here to be measured and made up to suit the tastes of the various markets for which the goods are intended.

When the visitor, having finished his ramble through the works, arrives at the making-up room, he is able to see all the different sorts of cloth in the finished state, and it is possible for an experienced eye to tell, by the style in which any particular lot of goods is made up, what part of the world they are going to.

In looking round at the soft, fleecy goods, with all their variety of design and colour, so attractive to the eye and pleasing to the touch, it is not difficult to understand why flannelette has become so popular in such a short time.

Its cheapness puts it within the reach of the poorest, the best qualities are not much more than half the price of a common flannel, it does not shrink in washing, and wears better than most makes of flannel.

THE TREACHERY OF AFTIZ BEY.

By F. VAUGHAN GIBSON.

I, AFTIZ BEY, am a Turk; yet for all that I would ask the great English nation not to think I am therefore a murderer, a ravisher, and a fanatic. There are many good Turks—quiet, industrious, noble-hearted fellows—whose sole desire is to dwell in peace with their Christian brethren, to obey the law of Mohammed, and afterwards to drink coffee at the bazaar with Greek and Armenian alike.

And I, Aftiz Bey, although the bearer of a great name, was poor, dwelling in sweet Adrianople, and knowing but little of anarchy in Crete

and massacre in Armenia. True—most sanguinary rumours came to my ears occasionally; but it was generally felt that his Majesty the Sultan was engaged in punishing the infidels on account of their rapacity and unfaithfulness—a duty which I had no doubt must have caused him great pain.

But although I was but thirty years of age, and notwithstanding the indolence in which the last five years have been spent, the blood of a warlike race flows in my veins, and the strategy I learnt at Toulon has by no means been forgotten. Consequently, when I was summoned on Easter Monday to an audience with his Majesty at Yildiz Kiosk, I went there in all haste, regardless of expense. Here at last was my opportunity, for although occasionally indolent, I was ambitious. Yet I was sorry when ordered to proceed through Salonika with a message in cipher to Edhem Pasha. I was only thirty—strong, clever, educated, patriotic, and ambitious. A great trust had been placed in me. Mine was a mission for which many a young Turk would have given his right hand, or risked his life, for a similar proof of royal esteem; yet I was wretched. What, then, was the cause of my wretchedness? I will tell you in a few words. I was in love with a Greek woman; and if I succeeded in carrying out my orders, the village in which she dwelt would be suddenly attacked, as it commanded a position of great strategic value. And the chains that bound me to Hekia Eterna—independent of love—were riveted strong as the bands of Time. Five years previous I had been sent on a secret mission by Izzet Bey into Larissa. While out at Rapsani one night taking observations by the light of the brightly shining moon I was surrounded by a small band of Andarti (professional irregular insurgents), bound, and carried into Tynavos. The chief of this band of Greek patriots was Achilles Eterna; and, once in a stone hut which served as a blockhouse, I was subjected to a thorough search. The result was conclusive. Turning upon me with a grim, set smile, he said:

'Courage, spy—thine hour hast almost come—thou diest at daybreak.'

With the calmness borne of despair at the thought of an ignominious death, I pleaded that I was an accredited agent of the Sultan, declaring with sincerity that a heavy ransom would be paid if demanded. With a face sterner than before—if that were possible—and in a tone of biting contempt, he replied:

'All is nought, coward, to us. Blood alone can expiate thy offence. Make peace with thy soul if thou canst; for that purpose these few hours are given thee.' And so he left me with his men.

A Turk feels the dread of approaching death quite as much as an Englishman or Frenchman—not perhaps in the wild excitement of battle, when infused with faith we press on with cries of Allah; but to lie on a stone bench tied to a staple in the wall like a dog, to see no pity in the faces of my captors—then it seems as if death has already touched the heart, and after the first

paroxysm of fear only a numbed feeling of dread remains. For one hour my mind wandered rapidly from Trebizond to Toulon—from London to Larissa. I saw again in Adrianople the handsome face of my father bending over me in my boyhood; and, when a slight breeze stirred the foliage around my prison-house, I almost fancied he had come again to kiss me and recite a prayer to Allah on my behalf.

By this time it must have been almost midnight, and I dozed. The weight upon my mind seemed to press physically upon my limbs as morphia, and I not only dozed but slept.

Suddenly a noise awoke me. It was the grating of the hinges in the heavy door. Through a slit in the stone wall above my head came a bright ray of moonlight which at first nearly blinded me, but in a moment I realised my position. One of the Andarti had brought a pair of scissors, and he commenced to cut off the collar of my jacket, feeling so sure of the strength of my bonds that he left the door open. I moved my head obediently as far as I was able; and, after this sinister and suggestive act had been completed, he turned to go, but at that instant a figure passed into the hut and the light coming through the door was partially obscured. Then the figure came and stood close to my head; and as the moonlight streamed through the chink I saw the head and face of a noble-looking woman of about twenty-one. She could not see my face with nearly so much distinctness as I could see hers, yet her face softened as she looked down upon me, bound and helpless.

'At what hour does he die?' she asked.

'At daybreak,' was the gruff answer.

'And is there no hope?'

'You know there is none, Hekla Eterna,' was the grim response.

They passed out, and again I dozed and slept; a rough shake aroused me, and when I was freed from the gyves that fettered me, I walked firmly out upon the heather. No time was lost. A rope was hanging from a tree, and rapidly a noose was formed and placed round my neck. At a signal from the chief I was hoisted quite ten feet from the ground, and then the rope broke. With angry exclamations they rushed forward. It was a new rope, *but the strands had been cut nearly through.*

I was partially stunned and dazed, but I could hear the buzz of human voices. Some water was thrown in my face, and one of the band ran for another halter. It was an old one this time; but I had recovered, and again I underwent the sickening process preliminary to the final pull. At the signal I was again hoisted some ten feet, when the strands parted, and again I fell heavily upon the soft soil. This time the rope had not been tampered with—it had broken through old age and rottenness. Then ensued an ominous consultation and daggers were fingered impatiently. At last, unable to bear the suspense any longer, I poured scornful curses upon them—curses which so maddened them that they rushed upon me with upraised daggers. Painfully I stood up, determined to show them that I could die bravely, when a figure sprang between me and the Andarti. It was the woman I had seen in the stone blockhouse. For a moment the maddened crew seemed awed. Then, with impre-

cations, they tried to drag her aside, but she stopped them by a gesture.

'Have pity,' she said; 'he has already twice undergone the agonies of death.'

'If he died a thousand times,' said Eterna, 'it would not be too many. He is a spy; so stand aside, Hekla, or even my love for thee will not save you from my anger.'

'Father,' she said, 'have mercy. He is young, and knew not perhaps the enormity of this offence. When the ague seized you did I not nurse you night and day? When your expedition against the Albanians failed, did I not enfeeble my youth in my efforts to serve you? And now when I beg for the life of this man, who has suffered more than the pangs of death, you threaten me, your daughter, Hekla Eterna.'

Achilles Eterna stepped forward with changed mien and faltering lip:

'Spy,' he said, 'promise that you will never draw sword against us, and your life will be spared.' For a moment I hesitated, so desperate was I; but one look at my preserver decided me.

'I promise,' I said, with all my heart. Then I was unbound and led into the hut, and soon I fell into a deep sleep; again I awoke and heard voices. It was some of the Andarti.

'The cursed Turk stole my wife—you know the rest,' said one.

'Even so,' said another; 'and I have sworn never to let a Turk live once he was delivered into my hands—yet he is to escape.'

'Still,' said a third, 'he is the first to escape, and Hekla saved my life. Let him go.'

Not without some trepidation did I hear their consultation; and, though I was relieved by their departure, sleep had at last quite deserted me. Allah was good, however, and thus it was, at ten o'clock that morning, I found myself without sabre, or sandwich, weary but elated, safely over the frontier on my way to Metsovo. The failure of my mission in a great measure accounted for my living in compulsory idleness at Adrianople.

But when I found myself once more safe from the clutches of the Ethniké Hetairia (a vast secret organisation which controls the Andarti and sometimes the Evzoni), my mind returned with gratitude to Hekla Eterna. Afterwards, for a long time at night, I would awake with a start at the slightest noise, and for a moment fancy that the fair form of Hekla stood at the head of my bed. And when I realised that I was safe I was so insane as to wish myself back in the stone blockhouse merely for the sake of gazing once more at that fair, noble face; but I was a Turk, her hereditary enemy, and it was impossible. Day after day I told myself this, but the more I reasoned the greater became my inclination to see Hekla, and tell her Greek-like of my passion; and at last, scornful reason, I set out to see her. I had been guilty of spending much of my slender patrimony in ascertaining the whereabouts of this dangerous band of insurgents. I will not describe my journey nor the risks I underwent of being shot or taken prisoner. After watching the blockhouse, in which she resided with her father, for many hours, I assured myself that she was alone; and, quitting my place of concealment, walked boldly to the door, knocked, and entered.

She was sitting on the floor, her hands clasped in front of her, evidently in a brown study; but immediately upon my entrance she sprang up and confronted me with flashing eyes and drawn dagger. I speak Greek perfectly, and was prepared for this reception.

'Hekla,' said I, 'do you not remember me?'

'Who are you? How dare you enter here? Begone!'

'Hekla, nearly eleven months ago you saved my life at Tyrnavos. I am Aftiz Bey, whom your father called the spy.'

Her eyes never softened—they seemed to gleam more fiercely, and a smile of contempt passed over her face.

'And so you have come again to spy, or to take my life, or to rob? Are you liar, murderer, or thief—which?'

'Neither, by the Beard of the Prophet. Gratitude and love brought me hither at the risk of my life. I ascertained your whereabouts and came to tell you that I would give my life in return for what you risked and dared to save me.'

She looked at me intently, and her face softened again as it had done on the night of my condemnation when I lay helpless on the stone couch awaiting my fate. Then she spoke softly:

'It is impossible; and as to your giving your life, there is hardly an Evzonos in the range of Olympus who would not give his life for me. No—there is only one thing possible, and that is for me to see you safely over the frontier before the return of my father.'

But the sight of her had driven my blood into flame. I told her how much I loved her; and, after a passionate appeal declared my determination to see her father rather than go rejected, scorned, and hopeless. She was a woman—the colour upon her cheeks grew deeper as I spoke of her heroism on that awful morning. She had no false modesty; and she never for a moment sought either to belittle her bravery or to egg me on in order to hear more compliments. At last, stretching out her hand, she said:

'Come, I could love you even as you love me; but you must go. Let us start at once.'

We crossed the frontier hand-in-hand together; and from that time I have lived upon the hope of one day possessing Hekla Etorna. True, I was a Turk—one of the hated Osmanli; but her father had at last given his permission, and we were to emigrate to Crete. There we should each dwell among our own people, and my money would be sufficient to enable us to grow and export fine fruits.

But war reared its ghastly head. For over eleven weeks I had heard nothing from Hekla, and at last I was summoned to the palace, and the rest is known. Attached to a brilliant staff under Ghazi Osman, our great hero, I went on ahead from Salonika to give my despatch into the hands of Edhem. At places the railway had been tampered with, and at last I had to quit it and proceed on horseback. Was I the victim of fancy and delusion? Over and over again when I halted in camp a pale-faced officer came up who seemed to eye me with looks of sinister ill-omen. Was I followed? He was evidently known, for our officers never failed to treat him

with respect. At last as I was starting to go on to Karadere this man came up to me.

'Tell me,' said he, 'art thou for Greece?'

His voice seemed strangely familiar—so familiar that I trembled with apprehension.

'No,' said I; 'I go to Edhem, as thou knowest.'

'Then show me the despatch,' said he, advancing still nearer. I seized my sword mechanically, but he only smiled—such a smile.

'You would be surrounded in one moment,' said he. 'As your superior I again demand to see your despatch.'

Reader, determined not to encompass the destruction of Hekla Etorna and her Andarti, I had thrown it into the Karadar close to Salonika. I was a traitor, and my love had turned me into a miserable renegade. I knew then that all was lost. Hekla Etorna, life, honour, all were gone—yet the fiend at my horse's head smiled.

'Dismount quietly,' said he; 'I want to talk to you.' After that was done he laid his hand upon my arm and said:

'Didst ever hear of Hektor Etorna?'

My heart gave a great leap. Indeed I had, but we had never met.

'I am he,' said Hektor.

Then in suppressed tones he stated that I was foolish for not carrying a sham despatch in cipher, lest a Turkish officer of authority should demand its production. At the same time Hektor produced a bogus despatch already prepared. It seems that while fishing in the Gulf of Salonika his hook had become entangled in some string, and when he drew it out of the water he found it was my despatch weighted with stones, just as I had thrown it in some seven miles higher up the river Karadar.

'Go now, noble fellow,' said he, 'and save my tribe. They are acting with some Evzoni a few miles north of Arta.' Soon we parted affectionately, and on I went—alone, but light-hearted.

As I got nearer the scenes of battle awful signs of the carnage confronted me. Heaps of dead Turks, Albanians, and Redifs met my eye almost continuously on the line of route right away through the Pass of Meluna. Mere lads and old veterans crawled along, almost destitute of clothing, and starving; but the coarse raven of the battlefield croaked around them, impatient for its meal.

So with the Greeks. Poor Italian volunteers crawled along crying hoarsely for water of every passer-by. But now I moved with extreme circumspection, as any moment I might fall in with some of the roving Greek bands, who might put me to death without parley as a Turkish spy. How many narrow escapes I had I cannot tell; and at last, towards night, I had to take shelter amid the mountains on my right, so numerous were the roving bands of both armies in all directions. I picketed my horse close to a ravine, and lay down to sleep, covering myself with a *fustanella* lent me as a disguise by Hektor Etorna, who, being a secret agent of the Greeks on the Turkish staff, had a capital supply of everything needful.

Soon the tragic scenes studding my day's journey passed away, and I fell into a deep sleep. Once a dog almost gorged to repletion with human flesh smelt my face, and the touch of its vile mouth and its sickening breath awoke me. With

a sudden movement I plunged my sabre in its side, and falling back slept on calmly; but at four o'clock I was once more aroused by the neigh of my charger. Springing up I fastened the *fustanella*, tightened the girths, and placed my foot in the stirrup; but before I had time to spring into the saddle every rock and boulder seemed to be alive with men. Resistance was useless, as I was covered by at least a dozen rifles, and at a signal from the leader I threw up my hands in token of surrender. I would have sold my life dearly rather than be taken, were it not for the strong hope that my explanation would save my life at least. But they heeded not my protests, these wild Andarti and Evzoni. They seized me with heavy hands, and soon found my bogus despatch, and it was vain even to attempt a hearing. I was bound, gagged, and blindfolded, and thrown across my own horse. Then we moved on I knew not whither. In the distance the sullen roar of artillery reached my ears, and a shudder seized me as I listened to the fierce yell of the carrion-dog. At last towards evening we stopped, and I was taken from my horse, every limb racking, every nerve quivering. They ungagged me; the handkerchief was taken from my eyes, and a terrible scene presented itself. We had swept across country and arrived at the gorges of Klinovon in the Pindus Mountains, and these insurgents had made an almost inaccessible mountain their headquarters. I was surrounded by nearly four hundred men, and a few wild-eyed women and children, who glared at me with mingled exultation and terror. Without any parley, a tall, gaunt, but well-armed Evzonos stepped forward, and with a gesture motioned me to be brought nearer to a heap of Greek corpses. It was done, and I could see they had been mutilated while dead, or living, by the soldiers of his Majesty Abdul Hamid. My blood froze as I looked at them. Were the living Greeks going to avenge their dead countrymen by torturing me similarly? A cold sweat broke out upon me. 'Seize him,' yelled the leader. Instantly I was seized and bound to a stake.

'Dog,' said Eclod the leader, 'some of these were wounded, and then burnt while living. We will see how you, a cursed Osmanli, can bear a similar fate.'

They piled up faggots round me with wild alacrity, and when all was prepared the chief took a large knife, and pressed it against my right side. Without moving a muscle I looked him intently in the face. The knife began to penetrate and blood to flow, while around me the throng seemed to exult in silence. Then to my surprise the knife was withdrawn, having penetrated less than an inch. Eclod smiled, then turning to the mob he said: 'The Osmanli is brave, and thought we could be as cruel as the Bashi-Bazouks, but he knows us not,' he turned to me and continued, 'Dog, you die in an hour by the bullet as a spy; but we are willing to hear you.'

'Chief,' said I, 'I am Aftiz Bey, sent with a despatch to his Excellency, Edhem Pasha, but I destroyed the despatch because Hekla Etorna has promised to be my wife. I was on my way to warn her when some of your band captured me.'

A look of the greatest incredulity spread over

their faces when I said that. Then, after a pause, they screamed out that I was lying; and if ever the human voice sounded the fierce lust of blood theirs did. It was an inarticulate sound that carried despair to my heart. Then Eclod the chief said grimly: 'Etorna will be here in a few minutes with Hekla. He was expected this morning. Relate your lying tale then.'

My heart gave a great bound; in a few minutes I should be free, free with Hekla! I looked at them, unheeding their curses, and smiled; when even then a clamour on the outskirts of the throng told me of their arrival. Etorna had risen in rank under the Ethniké Hetairia, and his uniform glittered with the sparkle of the orders on his breast. When he saw me his face paled with doubt and anger; and after hearing Eclod he said: 'Aftiz Bey, the key of Edhem's cipher was sent us by Hektor some days ago. If your tale be true we shall know. Let us see and examine the despatch.' They brought it and he examined it closely, and *I could see by the darkening of his face that Hektor had in mistake given me back the original despatch.* Turning to me he said: 'Twice a traitor, this is the despatch ordering the destruction of the village;' then, raising his voice, he shouted, 'He lies concerning the despatch; he is no friend of mine.'

Meanwhile Hekla had advanced smiling, but when she heard the expression of her father she paled.

'I do not know him,' she said.

Again they pressed forward, and at last despair had made me dumb.

'Hang the spy—do not shoot him,' they cried. Even in my despair no detail of the preparations escaped me, and above all I noticed with an increase of agony the pale face of Hekla Etorna. She never moved after she had spoken; but as they raised a temporary gibbet I thought her lips quivered. I noticed even that, and then my tongue was loosed at last.

'Save me, Hekla,' I shrieked.

Again her lips moved, but she made no sign. Then they seized me, but before they could drag me three yards she rushed to me and embraced me.

'If he dies I die too,' she said.

'Then you must,' said Achilles Etorna; 'you will not save your Turkish whelp this time.'

He drew his sword as if to stab his own daughter, when a yell was heard, and a rider in brilliant uniform was seen urging his horse up the gorge at a speed which taxed its strength to the uttermost. He urged his horse madly through the crowd which parted right and left.

'It is Hektor Etorna,' they cried.

It was indeed Hektor, who, finding that somehow he had retained the bogus despatch, and dreading the destruction of his village and the useless sacrifice of my life—had followed me with all speed. Several times he had been baffled, but his knowledge of the country and his unerring instinct had brought him to the gorge of Klinovon, where he knew his tribe was bivouacked. He told me afterwards that so intent were they upon putting me to death that he was in dread both for Hekla and myself, as being so engrossed they might not have noticed his signals in time. Their rage turned to gratitude upon hearing his explanation, and the joy of Hekla and myself cannot be

described in words. The next day we (Hekla, Hektor, and myself) started for Venitza, and by good fortune we got a Portuguese to run us up to Corfu in his loreha. From thence we sailed to England.

Thus I, Aftiz Bey, am in a position to relate my story. My treachery has done no harm, as the whole district has since been overrun by the brave troops of his Majesty the Sultan. And with sadness I read of that conflict between nations who should peaceably pay tribute to Islam; but politics concern me not, as destiny alone rules our lives. But I trust the time is not far distant when I, and Hekla, Hektor, and his father shall sit under our own cypress tree in sunny Crete; looking upon war as a bad dream, and devoutly wishing all mankind a seat in the Seventh Heaven.

PRICKING THE SHERIFFS.

WHEN Sir John Falstaff went recruiting on the service of the king, his method was a simple one; and there is a scene in the second part of *King Henry IV.* which sets it plainly before us, and which it may be well to recall in another connection. There are present Masters Silence and Shallow, both justices of the peace, to whom enters Falstaff. 'Gentlemen,' he asks, 'have you provided me here half-a-dozen sufficient men?' Whereupon Shallow, signifying an affirmative, takes a roll of parchment containing the names of the unwilling candidates, and calls them up for inspection. Four only have to be chosen from the six, and each, as his name is called, is prodigal of excuses. Falstaff, as he selects his man, says to Shallow, 'Prick him,' and Shallow makes a puncture in the roll opposite the victim's name. In vain does one grumble, 'You need not to have pinched me; there are other men fitter to go out than I.' To no purpose does another seek exemption on the ground that he is a 'diseased man,' with a cough which he caught ringing in the king's affairs upon his coronation day. A third accepts his fate more valiantly: 'No man's too good to serve his prince; and let it go which way it will, he that dies this year is quit for the next.'

It is possible to see in this more than the explanation of the odd phrase at the head of this column; it may have a satirical reference to the dramatist's own times, and to a ceremony which still survives. One Shakespearian commentator on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has the hardihood to suggest that when 'certain stars shot madly from their spheres, to hear the sea-maid's music,' there was a great pageant at Kenilworth, and the sidereal phenomena were only fireworks, the sea-maid but a hired singer on the ornamental water in the grounds. After that, it is permissible to assert with boldness that Shakespeare in the scene above quoted had in his mind the nomination and appointment of the sheriffs. Those high functionaries have always been chosen willy-nilly, like Falstaff's ragged regiment. To refuse to serve is now, as it was then, flat rebellion; and probably in the Elizabethan age reluctance to

accept the post was not unheard of. Fuller in his *Worthies* does not mince the matter. 'There may be somewhat of truth in their spiteful observation,' he says, 'who maintain that the shrievalty in ancient times was *honos sine onere*, in the middle time, *honos cum onere*, and in our days little better than *onus sine honore*.' If we are to judge from the proceedings in the Lord Chief-justice's Court on the morrow of St Martin of every year, it would seem that a good many land-owners are still of Fuller's way of thinking. That is the day, be it remembered, on which the judges meet, together with the other great officers of the Crown and privy-councillors, to report to the Privy-council the names of three fit persons for the office of sheriff in every county of England and Wales. To be eligible, one need only have sufficient lands within the county to answer the Crown and people. A preliminary list of qualified men is prepared by the sheriff in office, and given to the judges, who revise it, and hear excuses.

On the morrow of the Purification (February 3) the names are finally determined on, the first on the list being generally chosen, unless some valid excuse has been given meanwhile. Then the names are presented for approval to the Queen, who, at a meeting of the Privy-council, pricks or pierces with a bodkin the list opposite the names of the sheriffs appointed. This procedure does not apply to all counties. Cambridge and Huntingdon have one and the same sheriff between them. The sheriff for Cornwall is appointed by letters patent of the Prince of Wales as Duke of Cornwall. The sheriff of Lancashire is not pricked, but appointed at a separate time by the Queen as owner of the duchy. In Middlesex the office is executed by the sheriff of London, who is a nominee of the Corporation. In Westmorland it was hereditary in the Earls of Thanet, but the exception ceased to exist with the extinction of the title. For Durham, the Bishop used to officiate as 'keeper of the Queen's peace,' but the matter is now in the hands of the Crown. Sometimes a sheriff is appointed whose name does not appear in the list at all, and is assigned to the county on the sole authority of the Crown. Such a one is called a 'pocket-sheriff' in common parlance, on the analogy, perhaps, of the old 'pocket-boroughs.' It may be imagined that the recipient of the unexpected and burdensome honour would be aghast at the exercise of the prerogative; but no protest seems ever to have been made, and there can be no doubt that 'pocket' appointments are quite legal, if the authority of Blackstone be not out of date. The tacit assumption we are making is, of course, that no one would accept the office who could help it; and that because if it is not, in Fuller's words, 'a burden without honour,' at least the honour is too burdensome. The case is not one of conscience, as happened with the London sheriffdom when the Test and Corporation Acts were in force. It is said that the Mansion House was built with funds raised by fines for refusing to take office, which were incurred by Dissenters; and it may well be believed that a round sum was raised if the fine was as large as it is now—namely,

four hundred and thirteen pounds six shillings and eightpence, with an extra penalty of two hundred pounds if the original sum is not paid in a certain time. It cannot be said that the office is an unimportant one; as chief officer of the Crown in every county the sheriff has much to do. He is accorded every external mark of respect, ranking before any nobleman in the county, and taking precedence even of the lord-lieutenant; so that he is not without honour in his own land. Why, then, are men so backward to fill this high place in our polity? The answer is simple; the place is accompanied with too extensive a responsibility, and too great expense. No salary is at common law attached to it; so men of means must be chosen, much on the principle of picking out the fattest goose for killing. The unfortunate dignitary is liable to he cannot guess how many actions at the instance of those whom his officers and servants have wronged without his knowledge. If a wrongful distress be levied, or a mistaken arrest made, on him falls all the blame, and from him must come the monetary compensation. Of such outgoings he can make only a doubtful forecast; but there are in addition certain and unavoidable calls on his purse, which he must ruefully grin and bear. On him falls the weight of the lodging and protection of the judges at the time of the Assizes. If sufficient police-constables are provided, all is well; but even by the recent Act of 1887, if the police fail, the sheriff must have sufficient men in livery to keep order and protect the judges. In Scotland, on the other hand, the sheriff is a county judge, with jurisdiction both civil and criminal, and is chosen from the practising advocates or barristers.

To understand how much useless and unnecessary expense attended the office of old, we must turn to a statute of Charles II. which prescribes a reform in this regard; enacting that no sheriff shall hereafter keep any table at the Assizes except for his own family, or give any presents to the judges or their servants (fancy 'tipping' a judge!), or—this remarkable Act proceeds—have more than forty men in livery. Yet it is ordained that, for the sake of safety and decency, he may not have less than twenty men in livery in England, and twelve in Wales. No ordinary income could in those days support such a household. In the time of Elizabeth, doubtless, servants were much cheaper, yet we are assured that the necessity of maintaining such a number of retainers was found irksome, and economy was practised in many and doubtless illegitimate ways. 'No wise man will conclude them to be the less loyal subjects for being the more provident fathers,' says Fuller of the cheese-separating functionaries; and no wise man, it may be added, will quarrel with that cautious judgment.

Who can wonder, after what has been said, that few gentlemen of the county, of fair income, are delighted at the prospect of serving their country in the capacity of high sheriff? Year after year are excuses proffered, and nearly always nominees beg off on account of want of means. That is the best pretext of all, but there are others which have prevailed. Unless there are no other fit men (an unlikely acci-

dent), no one having served his yearly term can be called again to fill the office within three years. It used not, again, to be the custom to call upon the same family twice in the same generation; but the last nomination has dispelled that delusion. Practising barristers cannot be forced into sheriffdom; and there is known and recorded one instance at least of a counsel, long retired from active practice, who nevertheless kept his name on the books of his circuit till he was sixty years of age, that he might escape the invidious distinction. After sixty, it is believed, one is safe. If a sheriff, after appointment, refuses to serve, he may be proceeded against by indictment—to the terrible consequences of which one at least has dared to be careless; for in 1874 the sheriff elect of Bedfordshire refused to serve his term, and returned the warrant unopened to the Privy-council office. Nor does it seem that his conduct was visited with anything but a genial toleration.

A PHANTOM LAND.

THERE'S a land of which we often dream
In the hush of the twilight hours;
But afar o'er many an ocean stream
Are its happy vales and bowers.
Its singing birds are a merry crew,
And their songs are sweet and clear;
No shadows darken its skies of blue,
And no winter is in its year.

Oh, happy it were to wander there,
Where the fadeless roses blow;
Where the lilies sway in the scented air
In their robes as white as snow;
Where no ruthless breeze strips the full-leaved trees
In wood or in vale or grove;
Where the sunbeams play on the silvery seas
That are calm as the skies above!

But, ah me! no crafts are anchored
In its harbours safe and wide;
In its meadows broad, with verdure spread,
But the misty phantoms glide.
For that land afar o'er the trackless main,
Where the boughs are ever green,
That our storm-tossed barques may seek in vain,
Is the Land of Might-Have-Been.

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A GREAT DUTCH WATERWORK.

By DAVID STORRAR MELDRUM.

WITHIN the last few months the Dutch newspapers have been recording, not without a note of pride that is very justifiable, a mechanical triumph of the kind for which Holland is noted. A firm of engineers in Haarlem recently handed over to the Dutch Government, in working order, electrical machinery for doing a portion of the work in connection with the new lock on the North Sea Canal at Y-Muiden. The trials so far have been satisfactory. If they continue so during the probationary period, the electrical apparatus, it is understood, will be extended to the whole of the workings at Y-Muiden, and thus one of the most interesting and daring undertakings in the world will be crowned by the application to it of an electric motor, hitherto never used in work of this class.

The making of a canal from Amsterdam, along the gulf of the Y, and through the dunes to the North Sea, is an undertaking worthy of a people whose existence has ever depended upon their triumph over the forces of Nature. Directly, the project is an outcome of the needs of Amsterdam as a city of commerce. Amsterdam, without any outlet to the ocean save the impracticable channel of the Zuider Zee—choked at the city mouth by the great sandbank, the Pampus, and strait and dangerous at the other end where it cuts off Texel from the mainland—was in a state of splendid isolation which for long favoured, rather than retarded, her commercial superiority. When in the changed order of things, early in this century, a waterway to the sea from the capital became imperative, a canal somewhat on the lines of the present North Sea Canal was mooted. As far back as the middle of the seventeenth century, one Jan Pieterzoon Don had prepared plans for a canal across the narrowest part of North Holland—though it ought to be noticed that his object was not so much a means of communication with the sea as a means of getting rid of the inland sea of water which robbed the country of thousands

of acres of land and threatened to rob it at any moment of many thousands more. A hundred years later, an engineer of the waterways revived the project, and in the second decade of this century William I. strongly advocated it. But in 1820 the time was no more ripe for the undertaking than when Don planned it in 1634; and the canal which was determined upon and carried to completion was the North Holland Canal issuing on the sea at Helder.

Even now, perhaps, that is the Dutch canal best known to tourists in Holland. De Amicis wrote that it was one of the most wonderful works of the nineteenth century, and gave its dimensions, 80 kilometres in length and 40 metres in breadth, and estimated its cost at thirty millions of francs. Most of the notable descriptions of Holland were written before the completion of its rival to Y-Muiden; and, indeed, its winding course, by innumerable locks and under innumerable bridges, past Zaandam and Alkmaar and other show places, out to the sea at Nieuwe Diep, which is one of the most interesting spots in Holland, gives it a picturesqueness at least which cannot be claimed for the shorter, straighter, more business-like canal to Y-Muiden. For some fifty years the North Holland Canal was the only waterway for Amsterdam ships to the sea. As a matter of fact, however, it fulfilled its purpose very imperfectly. Large vessels did come to Amsterdam by way of it, but at great expense and loss of time. In 1865 the Prince of Orange put the first spade in the sand in the undertaking, long projected as we have seen, of a canal from the capital across the narrow neck of North Holland to the sea; in November 1876 the waterway was open; and now it is a scene of busy traffic and new engineering feats, while the older North Holland Canal lies deserted—picturesque still, but quite dead.

Ancient maps of Holland are a curious and interesting study. They discover changes in configuration such as no other country in the world, probably, could show in the same period. Take some lying before us as we write. Here is one

professing to show us the Netherlands before the twelfth century. There is no Zuider Zee, though there is a considerable inland sea a little to the north and east of the present Amsterdam; the river Yssel flows straight to the ocean, issuing upon it where now the strait between the mainland and the island of Texel leads out of the Zuider Zee; Texel, and Vlieland, and the other islands that stretch to Groningen to-day are still part of the mainland. By the thirteenth century, as we see from the next map, the ocean has burst into the land. The Zuider Zee has reached its present proportions, and indeed exceeded them, for then, and right on to the seventeenth century, the neck of North Holland is attenuated, and for the greater part the province is composed of inland seas and lakes. By the seventeenth century, however, the work of reclamation has begun; the maps now show where polders have been made—the Beemster and the Wormer for example; and as we come down to the middle of the present century, more and more water disappears and green fields take its place. The last of the inland seas to go was the lake of Haarlem, so notable in Dutch history, from which (they are the figures of De Amicis) 923,265,112 cubic metres of water were drained, after thirty-nine months of labour and an outlay of 7,240,368 florins—the result being a present to Holland of some forty or fifty thousand acres of land.

But one considerable stretch of water remained after the middle of this century. The gulf of the Zuider Zee, known as the Y, still stretched to Halfweg, on the railway route from Amsterdam to Haarlem, and on the north to near Zaandam, and westwards almost to Beverwijk at the foot of the North Sea dunes. Whereas to-day all that is polder; save for the canal and its branches, a stretch of fertile green. The amount of land thus reclaimed was about 12,500 acres. It realised £80 per acre on the average; some of it suitable for building purposes in the neighbourhood of Amsterdam brought £340 per acre, and as much as £120 per acre was paid for portions of it for agricultural purposes. That was the first-fruits of the North Sea Canal, as it was the first step in its construction.

As a picturesque route, as we have said, the North Sea Canal cannot compare with the other which meanders through North Holland northwards to Nieuwe Diep. Its great points of interest are the locks at either end. Those at the throat of the Zuider Zee, at Schellingwoude, over against Amsterdam, are three in number, conjointly named the Orange locks, after the (then) heir-apparent. It is sufficient to say that the largest of these ship-locks is 315 feet by 759 feet, while the two others are 239 feet by 46 feet, and to pass on to the much greater works at the Y-Muiden end, a little more than fifteen miles away. For the sake of comparison, we may mention that the largest of the locks on the North Sea, made when the Schellingwoude locks were made, is capable of holding a vessel 393½ feet by 59 feet. Finding this insufficient, the government commenced work upon another lock, of greatly larger dimensions, which was finished and opened for traffic some months ago. When we saw it last year, however, the connecting channel with the harbour had not been cut, and it lay before our eyes naked, with all the wonder

and beauty of its construction exposed. We must always consider it a happy chance which brought us to Y-Muiden before the water had rushed in to conceal this marvel of human ingenuity. A few figures—of the cubic metres of sand and water removed, of the number of piles driven in for the walls and floors, of the pressures, of the cost—can convey no idea of the work to the reader's mind. There appeared recently in one of the Dutch magazines a series of articles describing very graphically and in great detail the progress of the undertaking; but even a summary of these would occupy many columns, and would be futile without diagrams. We propose, therefore, to tell in a sentence or two the general impression made upon us by our visit last year, leaving it to the reader himself to conceive the skill and patience and daring of the Dutch engineers.

Instead of making the short railway journey to Y-Muiden, we alighted at Velsen junction, and walked. In this way we came gradually and with better understanding upon the main works. First, a mushroom hamlet, not Dutch in character, but sprung out of the needs of the enterprise, and in its squalor and neglect, and curiously enough in its background setting also, reminding us of a familiar mining village in the east of Scotland. For the next few hundred yards, however, we are in Holland: the road is of *klinkers*; peasants in Dutch costume pass along, and over the flat landscape to the right appear, now and then, a mast, a sail, a column of moving smoke—indications of canal. Suddenly, at a bend of the road, the rising morning mists discover for us, pale but bright, the village of Y-Muiden, and the two tall lighthouses rising apparently from its midst, and, beyond, the sea. And now on our right, as we walk along, are the works themselves—the new channel to the new lock, dredgers vomiting forth yellow water at the tail of the bank, endless chains of buckets, cranes, sheds, lighters, steamers, groups of navvies; and all the while, on the older channel nearer us, the everyday traffic, and cutters and fishing-smacks skipping across the harbour beyond the locks. For a hundred yards or so the road becomes the main street of Y-Muiden, and by a sharp turn at the farther end leads on to the quay. A Grimsby snack or two lie beside it, unloading for the Dutch auction proceeding close by. After watching these and some vessels entering the old lock, we are ferried across the new fisher-harbour, and walk past the lighthouses to the harbour proper. The neck is cut through the dunes, and then two great, long, widely-separated piers, like gigantic feelers, are thrown out into the North Sea, the heads of them, nearly three-quarters of a mile out, bending in to within 280 yards of each other, and enclosing a shelter for 300 large vessels. After a blowy walk along one of the piers, we return to the outer lighthouse, and climb to the top. And now, really for the first time, the gigantic nature of the undertaking is revealed to us. Here, unbroken save where the harbour stretches a neck through them, are the dunes, from sixty to eighty feet high, which shelter the low-lying country from the ocean. But for them, the whole country to the very gates of Amsterdam would be at its mercy. To pierce them, trusting to these fragile arms to keep back the enemy, is

surely during confidence in human skill. To-day the sea lies peacefully shimmering in the sunlight; but think of it, as on an earlier day we spent at Helder, thundering under a gray sky upon the gigantic dike. And then the eye turns inland to the locks, some three-quarters of a mile from the sea. A very little scientific knowledge enables us to understand the dangers of construction from ground water, with all that pressure of dunes. Enormous locks and enormous gates, beautifully and ingeniously constructed, giants among engineering works, yet, after all, pigmies against the ocean when the tide has risen six feet, say, above the normal water level of the Y at Amsterdam!

And now we come back to the point from which we started. It is to the lighting and to some of the gates and draining shutters of the new lock at Y-Muiden here that electricity has been applied. Four years ago the minister of the Water Department offered a prize of £100 for the best scheme for the working of the locks, and a year later this was awarded to two Dutch engineers, Mr J. F. Hulsmit and Mr F. C. Dufour. The apparatus is contained in large underground chambers adjoining the canal, and is worked from the lock-heads. Although the application of electricity to this kind of work is quite novel, and the engineers had no previous experiments to go by, the machinery in the case of the two gates on which it is being tested works well. The gates were opened and shut by means of it in ninety seconds. If, as has been said, the further tests are equally satisfactory, the system will be extended to the whole of the workings, and fittingly crown an undertaking that, as De Amicis said of the older canal, is one of the wonders of the nineteenth century.

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER XXXII.

WHEN the disappointed crowds realised that the Tsar had thought better of his intended visit to the opera, they regretted the circumstance, but settled down, like sensible folks, to enjoy the music. They had not bargained for a grand excitement afterwards, when all was over and the congested house began to pour forth its living streams of delighted though weary music-lovers; but a charming surprise was thrown in with the music, and, being unexpected, was the more appreciated. Squads of police and gendarmes were found to be in waiting at the conclusion of the performance, and one or two officers entered the building as the curtain fell and requested the occupants of certain rows of stalls to remain seated. When this happened a man—one of those in the fourth row of stalls—fainted, and was immediately carried into the gangway and examined. To the consternation of all who caught a glimpse of the proceedings, a pistol was taken from his pocket—a small revolver fully loaded. Two persons in the same row were found to be armed with business-like knives, which they attempted to conceal.

In the second of the suspected rows the same thing happened, with the exception of the fainting. The man with the revolver, in this instance, struggled violently, and his pistol exploded, one

of the police-officers having a narrow escape. The bullet smashed part of the gigantic glass chandelier overhead.

By the Tsar's special orders these men, together with those captured outside and in the corridor, were at once informed that, though their lives were forfeit, they would be granted a free pardon if they could find friends to answer for it that they acted under compulsion, and could also name and identify those at whose bidding they had armed themselves. Luckily for all, one of these men was acquainted with Karaool, and knew him as the No. 1 from whom all edicts of this society originated; while nearly all were able to prove that they were unwilling agents, employed by the circle for that very reason: because they were considered weak, and therefore dangerous members of the society. Karaool was taken, but being unwilling to suffer alone, immediately named those who had acted with him as members of his detestable inner circle. Thus the entire hornets' nest was destroyed at a blow; for without these prominent members to fool them, and to involve them ultimately in ruin, the brotherhood of Karaool & Co. soon dissolved itself into the elements, and few indeed of its members honestly regretted its dissolution. The removal of this branch could not, at a blow, destroy the whole tree of murderous conspiracy, but for some years, possibly, the spread of Nihilism was checked by the upheaval, and terrorism received a shock from which it was slow to recover.

The day after the affair of the *Bolshoi Theatre*, Philipof, in bed in a comfortable room in the Winter Palace, to which he had been brought the night before by the Tsar himself, received a visit from the Emperor. What passed at that interview Philipof would never reveal; but it is certain that he not only freely and absolutely forgave his sovereign the misunderstanding which had cost him so dear, but that from that moment the Tsar had no more devoted adherent to his person and no truer admirer than Sasha, who would never allow his master to be blamed for that which had happened in less happy days. The Tsar had only acted upon the evidence put before him, he declared, and could have done nothing else. A less moderate and merciful sovereign, and a less perfect gentleman, might easily have been induced to destroy the innocent with the guilty; but the Tsar forebore to take the life of either of two suspected persons, lest in the pursuit of guilt he should smite innocence.

Before the Tsar had left Sasha's chamber a second visitor was announced—Dostoief, at the announcement of whose name Philipof looked grave and the Tsar smiled.

'You must forgive him as you have forgiven me, my friend,' he said, 'for his fault is over-loyalty to my person; this blinds him to other things.'

'I know it, sire,' said Philipof; 'it is my only complaint against your Majesty, if I may humbly say so. I care nothing for my own misfortunes; your Majesty has more than atoned to me for my temporary loss of rank and position, but Dostoief can never recall his neglect of one whom I tenderly loved.'

'Ah, poor lady!—I forgot,' said the Tsar. 'Dostoief, you shall make what amends you can by attending better to your children in future—'

this at least you can promise to your cousin !' The Tsar did not leave the room until he had seen Sasha take Dostoief's hand within his own in token of the burial, as far as possible, of the hatchet.

'I scarcely dare to appear in your presence, Philipof,' said Dostoief when the Tsar had left, 'after all that has happened; but I most solemnly swear, before God, that I have honestly believed you guilty. You would not have had me behave otherwise, once I had fallen into this error? As for the neglect, I admit, if you will, that my conduct may have seemed unkind, but, nevertheless, I loved poor Olga well.'

And Philipof, knowing what it must have cost Dostoief to say so much, accepted the peace-offering in the spirit in which it was tendered.

Doonya was specially summoned by the Tsar, who sent an aide-de-camp for her. But Doonya did not return to town in the little cabin of 'Lighter No. 15;' she came in a smart steam-yacht, and was driven to the palace in a court carriage, to her inexpressible astonishment and—if it must be confessed—terror. But the sight of poor broken-legged Sasha smilingly awaiting her soon restored her to herself, and she was able to tell her story to the Tsar with fair composure. As this story goes a little further than the reader has yet heard it, we will listen to the end of it with the Tsar and Philipof.

'Some one,' Doonya continued, 'must have seen Kirilof or me at Cronstadt, or perhaps both of us together as we drove to the wharf on the night of my death—I mean'—Doonya blushed and paused—'the night I was supposed to have died; for one evening at dusk, as we lay in the harbour at Cronstadt, Kirilof's barge next to mine—it was dark enough to allow of our sitting on deck and talking—two men suddenly rushed out at us from behind some bales; they had knives, and said they came to punish treachery. Kirilof jumped up and defended himself and me with a short boat-hook; he was wonderfully quick and brave and kept them for a minute or two at bay. Then one of them ran in and stabbed poor Kirilof badly, and I thought my last hour had arrived; but I had a knife—the one you took from Katkof—and struck out at them for a few moments; and Kirilof and one of the men wrestled and fell overboard together, and were drowned locked in each other's arms. Almost at the same moment old Ivan rushed on board, seized the boat-hook, and ran the spike of it clean through the second man's body. That was last night; and now here I am.'

'That is good,' said the Tsar; 'and there is better behind. Your society is now no longer in existence; you are safe, and your sovereign—rather than slay whom you would yourself have perished—is safe also. And all this is due to one Lieutenant-colonel Alexander Philipof, of the Okhotsk Regiment, whom I have decorated with the cross and collar of St Anne, but who tells me that he is dissatisfied with this measure of favour, and will not live in the same country as the Tsar who so grievously offended him'—

'No, no, your Majesty,' began Sasha, flushing. The Tsar motioned him to be silent.

'And declares,' he continued, 'that he will marry and settle down in a foreign land for a year or two before he entirely forgives us and

permanently takes up his abode among us again. This is scarcely kind of Colonel Philipof; but since the grievance is undoubtedly on his side, I shall say no more at present in order to induce him to remain at home.—The position of military attaché is vacant at the Court of St James, Philipof; it is yours on two conditions.'

Philipof seized the Tsar's hand and kissed it, tears welling into his eyes. This was the position of all others he would have chosen, for he had learned to love the English well during his Crimean experience; and he really felt that absence from Russia for a while just now was almost a necessity.

'I accept the conditions without hearing them, your Majesty,' he said.

'They are these,' said Alexander the Liberator: 'that you do not stay away more than, at most, two years; and that you take this lady with you as my nominee to see that the condition is strictly observed.' With these words his Majesty placed Doonya's hand in Sasha's, and bowing and smiling with the inimitable courtesy for which he was remarkable, the Tsar left the room.

Since that day Philipof has been heard to observe that he can *almost* forgive Dostoief all that once happened through his unutterable devotion to his sovereign; and if he cannot quite forgive him his neglect of wife and children, he can at least fully understand the blind adoration that weaned him from every private interest and every private claim, and centred his whole devotion upon one object.

'I declare,' Philipof sometimes says, 'I feel like it myself occasionally, Doonya. You and Alex and Olga and Vera will have to look out! I shall become like Dostoief some day, for I love the Tsar amazingly!'

But Doonya smiles and places a hand upon her husband's mouth to stop his wicked speeches, and turns to her eldest child for confirmation as she replies: 'We are not very frightened, are we, Alex?'

And little five-year-old Alex kisses his father and says that he has a much better father than cousin Petka—which is a sentiment in which poor little Petka entirely concurs, for uncle Sasha has from the first been a warm favourite in that quarter!

THE END.

FRENCH MUSHROOMS AND MUSH-ROOM-GROWING.

By R. HEDGER WALLACE.

SOME of us have perhaps obtained our first introduction to these edible fungi by seeing in a grocer's window bottles labelled *champignons*; or else by wondering at the composition of some dish, which according to the menu and the autocratic will of the cook is said to contain *champignons*. Observation thus teaches the uninstructed that this is French for mushrooms. Again, we will find the word used in the price lists of some of the stores and larger grocers, and in those rare cases when the English cognomen is employed the entry will probably be as follows: 'Mushrooms—French, per tin; Button, per bot.;

Powder, per bot.' We trust in the course of this article to explain these terms, and perhaps throw a side-light on the subject at various points. No one who lives in the country needs to be told what mushrooms are like; others, not so fortunate, can imagine them as a vegetable 'Sarah Gamp,' open and closed, in its many intermediate stages. No vegetable food feeds us like the mushroom, and it is readily eaten by sheep, cows, and pigs; horses rarely or never eat it.

The mushroom is somewhat of a mystery; nobody knows much about it. In France the scientists have spent laborious years in experimenting, and have at length discovered a part of the mushroom's secret, namely, the conditions under which they will grow; and now everybody in France knows that it can be made to grow in any quantity desired. Their raising is so profitable, and the people are so fond of them, that very few Frenchmen are so poor that they cannot have their nutritious and beloved *champignons*. The result is that the consumption of mushrooms in France is prodigious. Cultivation is carried on chiefly in the departments of Nord, Marne, and Seine-et-Oise in the north of France, and Gironde, Corrèze, and Drôme in the south. Near the city of Paris it is a special industry. In other departments the cultivation is as yet crude and imperfect, the mushrooms being simply gathered in the woods by women and children, dried in the sun, and in this condition offered for sale. To the trade three sizes of mushrooms are known—buttons, cups, and broilers. While the cup adheres to the stem the mushroom is called a button. As soon as the buttons begin to open they are called cups. The cup severs its side connection with the stem, and becomes a hood of various sizes. As soon as it begins to expand flat it is a broiler. If left, however, until the gills (the pink lines underneath) become brown or black, the mushrooms are then too old for broiling, and are only fit for ketchup. The market price is highest for buttons, and lowest for broilers; and though many more buttons are needed to make up a pound than the others, yet they grow in less time, and afford ten to twelve crops to four or five of broilers. When the hood is expanded like an umbrella, the mushroom is very indigestible, and, in France, worthless.

Nearly all the small white mushrooms grown in France are cultivated artificially in caves or quarries. The mushroom likes a cool, damp, and dark place, and light has a decided effect upon its colour. If sunlight reaches it, the hood or cap will be reddish brown; but allowed to grow in the darkness, especially in caves, it will be white, fat, and far more nutritious. In France we might say that the best mushrooms are invariably cultivated in subterranean excavations. In the department of the Seine alone there are over 3000 of these caves, and in them live about 300 people—*champignonistes*—who rarely see the daylight, and can only reach the outer world by way of rope ladders.

One of the most interesting sights around Paris

is the mushroom caves or tunnels, many of them under the city streets. One cave at Montragne, near Paris, furnishes a daily average of 300 pounds of mushrooms. Some idea of the mushroom industry in and around Paris may be gained from the fact that in it a capital of close upon two millions sterling is employed, and that in Paris alone there are sixty wholesale firms dealing exclusively in mushrooms. The annual crop of mushrooms in France is valued at over £400,000.

A species of mushrooms usually grown in that part of France for which Bordeaux is the shipping port is known as 'cèpes,' and this is the so-called vegetable beefsteak. Some varieties attain a weight of three pounds, and are frequently 12 inches in width. These mushrooms (*Boletus*) are grown wild, mostly in woods, and although relished by the peasantry and natives of the district where found, would scarcely suit the taste of dainty consumers.

In France great care and attention is given to the preservation of mushroom caves. Sudden changes of temperature must be provided against, and the ventilation must be such that the temperature will vary little in summer or winter—the best results being produced at an even temperature of about 48° F. According to French mushroom-growers, it is also important that the air currents should never be more than slightly appreciable and move invariably in the same direction—from north to south. The making of the beds is a very important matter, greater even than temperature and air currents; but on the quality and preparation of the manure composing the beds, more than anything else, does the success of the mushroom-grower depend. The droppings of horses that are hard worked but well fed with food of the dry kind—oats, hay, &c.—are the best manure for these beds. The addition of leaves, earth, or sawdust to swell bulk or check heat will probably ruin the productive power of good manure. According to reports on mushroom-growing made by the United States Consuls in France, to which we have to acknowledge our indebtedness for many details, the smallest beds made in France are 5 metres (16·4 feet) long, 4 metres (13·12 feet) wide, and 0·8 metre (2·67 feet) high. They are 'combed' with a rake, so that every particle of foreign matter is removed. After seven days the beds are again remade, combed, &c., carefully watered, and left alone for another week. Then—two weeks from the beginning of the work—the same process is again gone through, and the mass finally allowed to rest for three days. It should then be soft to the touch, and leave no trace of moisture on the hand; and in this state it is ready for the seed or spawn.

The next step, that of spawning or seeding, is the most important in the whole proceeding. The spawn is usually supplied by market-gardeners, who get the germs from their old melon beds. It is sold in bricks or cakes, and if kept in a dry, ventilated place, will not spoil for several years.

The spawn is procurable by three methods. By the first method, a ditch is cut along the base of a wall that has an eastern exposure. Over the bottom of the ditch about six inches of wheat chaff is spread, and then six inches of prepared manure as used in the beds, but mixed with one-fourth its volume of short cut, fine straw to give cohesion to

the bricks when cut. The ditch is then filled with alternate layers of prepared manure and wheat chaff, and on the top raised into a conical form and covered with six inches of pulverised earth. When ripe, the mass will present spongy filaments of a bluish character, exhaling a strong odour of mushrooms. This mass is then cut into bricks, and put into a dry, cool place; but the bricks must neither touch nor be piled one upon the other. Any part of the mass having a dark-brown colour must be thrown away, as this 'spawn' will not reproduce. By this method the spawn is said to have formed spontaneously. The second method is the one usually followed by growers, and the germs from former old melon beds are used; but it has no other advantage over the first except that it requires less time. The ditch and bed are prepared precisely as in the first method; but if made in spring a northern exposure is chosen, in early autumn an eastern. The difference is that when the first six inches of prepared manure is put in along the sides, rows of the little bricks of germs are pressed into the mass about a foot apart, and this is done at every layer of the prepared manure. At the end of six weeks the spawn should be ready, and can be cut into bricks and preserved.

By the third method the mixture of manure is made as in the first method, but to it is added one-third of pigeon or chicken droppings. The bed, &c. is exactly the same as in the first way, and in two months bricks of an excellent quality may be cut. The bricks must not be cut too thick. Very thick bricks waste the spawn and produce what is called a 'rock.' In this the upper layers of mushrooms can develop, but the others are suffocated.

If in the brick there is any appearance of certain kinds of mould, it must be thrown away, as it will produce a poisonous mushroom. The filaments must be bluish white—no other colour. Having prepared the beds, and produced or procured the spawn, the cultivator has little to do except to plant the bricks and seed the beds. Several days after the planting of the bricks, the filaments will come to the surface and cover the mound.

In the Bordeaux district, to obtain mushroom beds, a quantity of wild mushrooms is dried and pulverised, and the powder scattered plentifully over a layer of manure.

The next process is 'soiling,' or, to use the slang word of the French mushroom-growers, 'goptage.' To 'gopter' the bed is to cover it with about six inches of prepared earth. In the stone quarries the refuse of the cuttings is sifted, and the finer part is called 'bousin.' This is mixed thoroughly with light earth, in the proportion of three of 'bousin' to one of earth, and makes the prepared earth already mentioned. Where 'bousin' cannot be obtained, powdered gypsum will do as well. Earth or soil that has been used for the growth of any plant, or in any way has its strength exhausted, will not produce mushrooms, neither will virgin earth bear again after it has once served to produce them.

The 'goptage' is regarded as a matter of the utmost importance, and the action of 'bousin' is due to the presence of salts of nitre, or saltpetre, which furnish the plant with a supply of available nitrogen. Scientific investigation has conclusively

shown that the very life of the mushroom depends upon a good supply of saltpetre, and acting on this, growers can produce mushrooms at all seasons, without the use of manure, by a method which is very inexpensive.

Old plaster is broken up into pieces about the size of hazelnuts, moistened, and put as an embankment, about two feet wide and two feet high, against the walls of a cellar or cave. In this the spawn-bricks are placed, and the whole covered with about an inch of perfectly fresh and clean sand, not too moist, from a river or stream. As soon as the sand has dried perfectly, it is sprinkled lightly with a solution composed of, or in the proportion of 125 grammes (4.40 oz.) of saltpetre to 10 litres (9 quarts) of water. At the end of forty days the crop will appear.

From the first appearance of the crop the mushrooms are open to attacks of disease and pests. Mould is a veritable mushroom plague causing the hood to drop and close around the stem. The whole is soon covered with a cotton-like coating, emitting a sickening odour, similar to that of putrid meat. The why and wherefore of this disease has not yet been solved, and the only course open is to destroy the whole bed.

Again, attracted by the fumes from the beds, millions of gnats deposit their eggs in them, and reduce the 'goptage' to a mere powder. The remedy is to have an open lamp floating in a tub of soapsuds. Wood lice also attack both mushrooms and beds; but if sliced apples be strewn about the beds, they feast on these, and can be thus trapped and slaughtered. Slugs, or black snails, are also fond of mushrooms, but they are fonder of cabbage leaves, and if these be supplied, the mushrooms will escape. Rats and mice simply love mushrooms, and are very troublesome to growers. Of all the remedies tried, poisoning has been most successful, but the difficulty is, that they prefer mushrooms to the poison. Worst of all are the larvae of two insects—Colcopteres—which attacks pawn, bricks, beds, and mushrooms, and against this pest there is absolutely no known remedy.

The mushroom is ready for market when its hood is the size of a shilling piece, and from that up to a crown piece; but cooks do not care for the larger ones. As regards 'cèpes,' the larger they are the better. In the caves near Paris the mushrooms are gathered at one in the morning; and often within two hours after plucking are on the stalls. Those raised in the open are gathered after sunset. If they are to be preserved, they should be entirely dry when gathered; but the temperature must never be too hot, or the mushrooms will lose much of their aroma. If they are to be eaten at once, it is better to gather them when there are still traces of dew, as the fresher the mushroom, the greater the aroma and flavour. The method generally employed for preserving mushrooms for household purposes is that of drying. Only those of medium size are taken, carefully skinned and cleaned, and then plunged for a minute into boiling water, to which a little lemon juice, citric acid, or vinegar has been added. Care must be taken not to allow any salt or saline matter to come near the mushrooms. They are only washed in salt water when preserved in tins.

The mushrooms, when taken out of the boiling

water, are allowed to drain on a wire screen, and then strung like beads, in such a manner that they do not touch each other. They are then suspended in the shade in the open air, or in a well-ventilated room. When thoroughly dried, they are put in paper bags, and stored in a perfectly dry place.

Mushrooms thus treated lose part of their aroma and flavour, but they keep indefinitely, and are in France an article of standard commercial value. Sometimes the mushrooms are dried in an oven, crushed into powder, and preserved in this form. Before cooking, the dried mushrooms must be soaked in warm water or milk to restore them. Another process of preservation, resorted to mostly by small dealers and households, and more costly than drying, is that of conserving the mushrooms in oil or melted butter, and by this process the aroma and flavour are retained. The mushrooms, after draining, are placed one by one in wide-mouthed bottles, and over them is poured melted butter or warm olive oil. The bottles are then sealed and placed in a cool place, for if the temperature be too high there is great danger of fermentation. Large manufacturers employ the 'appert' process. By this process the mushrooms are peeled and thrown into water made slightly acid with vinegar. They are next drained and plunged into boiling butter till parboiled, and then placed one by one in wide-mouthed bottles till three-fourths full. The bottles are well corked, and the corks tightly and very securely held in place by strings, and the bottles wrapped in straw. They are then placed in large caldrons of cold water, at the bottom of which is straw. The caldrons are placed on the fire, and the water brought slowly to the boiling point. After ten minutes they are taken from the fire, and after the water has gradually cooled, the bottles are taken out and sealed with wax. With tinned mushrooms, after being carefully washed, scraped, and bleached, they are either slightly cooked before being placed in the tins or placed in the tins with water and the tins boiled or steamed till the mushrooms are partially cooked. After the tins have been closed and soldered, they are then boiled again, in order that they may be more perfect in their preservation.

There is little else to note with regard to French mushrooms. Our intention is to interest the reader generally in the subject, so that when next he uses a bottle or tin of mushrooms he will have some idea of the industry and how the fungi were reared and conserved.

In the *Paris Journal of the Board of Agriculture* it has been recorded that the artificial mushroom industry of Paris in 1895 employed a capital of £1,600,000, gave employment to many hands, and has been carried on at a fair profit. The mushrooms, it is said, are largely cultivated in caves specially prepared for the purpose. It is nearly twenty years since a practical horticulturist showed how profitably mushrooms could be raised all over this country, and in the most unlikely places. He gave practical advice even as to the cultivation of the delicious fungi in the cellars of the houses in the very centre of the largest cities in the country, and some who experimented on the lines laid down did so to very considerable advantage. It is a popular delusion

that mushrooms artificially raised are inferior to the spontaneous growths of our meadows and wild fell lands. Artificial rearing has improved rather than deteriorated the mushroom.

O'ER SEA AND LAND.

CHAPTER IV.

At the inquest Ernest had at any rate the chance of offering his own account of Jehan's tragic end. Small comfort was it to him, however, to glance from the emotionless face of the coroner to the openly incredulous visages of the jury. And although his testimony was as firm and matter-of-fact as that afforded by Ford, so much was the best that could be said. The Mayor gave his evidence with an air of truth. His position carried weight which the unknown stranger from London lacked, and public opinion distinctly leaned towards his version of the story. Notwithstanding which the inquiry did not come to an immediate termination. In order to allow the police time to gather further information as to the identity of the deceased, the inquiry was adjourned for a fortnight, and the world of Upton returned home to discuss in comfort what it regarded as the Mayor's veracious history and Ernest's improbable tale. Mannering's friends, however, reversed the adjectives, and, altogether, the young man had no cause during the crisis either to feel out in the cold or neglected. For the whole body of Chums, having heard the narrative of Ford's accusations, had insisted on accompanying Ellis down to Upton on the Tuesday. Such support as their united presence and sympathy could bestow, their most popular *confère* should receive. Nor did they return to town until an impromptu indignation meeting had been held amongst themselves in the largest available room at the Queen's Hotel, and Dick had thereat expounded such of his plans and ideas as he saw well.

'Man against man,' he said. 'Comes to that. Pull devil, pull baker. Weakest goes to the wall. Mannering's oath against Ford's oath. Understand?'

'And the Mayor will have the best of it,' from Clements, who was not an absentee to-day. 'Eh, Gynie.'

'Depends. Discredit one witness, credit the other. Down Johnson, up Jenkins. See? Of course, may trace nigger chappie and connection with Ford. But better begin other end. Rum-mage out Ford; find secrets. Skeleton in cupboard, and that sort of thing.'

There was a roar of approval, mingled with inquiry. But Ellis had no intention of more clearly divulging his notions, and not another enlightening word would he utter. Only, in virtue of the Chums' bond, he allowed the loudly-urged claim that each should be permitted to bear his share in the expenses incidental to Ernest's defence, expenses which he himself would infinitely have preferred to defray alone. After which arrangement the necessity for catching the London train broke up the conference.

It was thus that, whilst Mannering, more dejected than ever, was meditating in silence and loneliness over his troubles, Ellis was interviewing

the best private detective resident in the great city and giving him his instructions. The man seemed attentive and sharp-witted, as well as educated, perhaps, above his level. He talked in a voice of the profoundest bass and in short, abrupt sentences which had a directness pleasing to Dick, who trusted him from the moment he heard him speak. In consequence, he himself was wisely frank in his communications. Smart learned not only that he was required to rake over the ashes of Ford's past and to bring each action of his life to view, but also heard details of the Chums' Club and who they were who desired this service of him.

'Something shady 'll turn up somewhere, depend. Tell by sly eyes. Besides, too cool a villain for first go off. Must have cooked up that tale in about five seconds,' were Dick's final words. 'Remember, needn't spare the cash. And good reward at end. Chums responsible.'

And then he journeyed down to Upton again to tell Ernest what he had done, and to cheer that unfortunate captive's drooping spirits by as much companionship as police regulations permitted. Happily, since they stood in the relation of solicitor and client, their intercourse was comparatively but little restricted, though their conversation was by no means invariably upon legal topics.

'Of course the uncle 'll give in when all is explained,' remarked Ellis one day in the course of that weary week of waiting, when he had found Ernest especially depressed. 'Never say die, old boy!'

'But I tell you he wouldn't alter now to save his life,' resting his arms upon the plain deal table of the whitewashed room where their interviews took place. 'It's being mixed up in the row that he objects to, just as he told you. Though, goodness knows'—

'Can't be such a fool!' was Ellis's concisely expressed opinion.

'Oh, can't he! He's an——. But there, I don't want to call him names,' with a great sigh that seemed to come from very deep down indeed. Like most men of his mercurial temperament, when Ernest was miserable he gave his whole soul up to the process. 'If only I could persuade her that love outweighs obedience I'd adore him for the rest of my natural life. But I can't! There isn't a chance of it!' with a mirthless laugh. 'About that she's as determined as—as—well, as they make 'em.'

Ellis meditated awhile, conjuring up the pretty, troubled face that, in the course of one short half-hour, had found the way to a very tender spot in his heart. Then, 'Send letter when matter's a trifle clearer,' he suggested. 'After Monday, say.'

'Perhaps. I would directly, if they'd only let me out on bail,' rising, and beginning to walk uneasily up and down the boarded floor, with his hands in his pockets and his head hanging. 'But she'll never go against her guardian—never!'

Ellis got up also, and, gathering together sundry scattered notes and papers, prepared for departure.

'Expect to see Smart to-night,' he remarked. 'News to-morrow, may depend. Shan't be down till afternoon though. Can't!'

'I shall look for you then,' as they grasped hands and parted, Ernest to spend the intervening hours in tedious idleness, Ellis to catch the train,

for which he was already late. But, fortunately for him, the line was not renowned for punctuality.

Unhappily Smart was as yet unable to report any very striking discovery as the result of his investigations. Sitting in Ellis's rooms that evening, his shrewd face lighted with alert interest, the detective told his story, as far as it went. Since first hearing the details of the case he had paid a visit to Shoreton, in order to commence investigations in a neighbourhood where the speculator's history might be supposed to be well known. No stone had he there left unturned. Yet, at first, he had been baffled at every corner.

Beyond the facts that Ford was a bachelor, that he had arrived in Upton some ten years back, that he was then evidently amply provided with capital, and that he had immediately purchased a tract of land at the top of the cliff, little information was forthcoming. No one possessed any knowledge of his antecedents, and it was entirely owing to his own conduct and cleverness that he was now reputed to be an honest and respectable citizen, though a trifle too sharp in business matters, and without a tender place in his nature.

'Shoreton didn't seem much good, as far as my instructions went,' Smart continued, in his jerky, quick manner and deep voice. 'So the next thing was to try farther back. To do which I had to ferret out where Ford came from. That was a poser, rather, sir. And it was only by chance that I got on the track. You remember Snell, the stationmaster, perhaps? Little white-haired gossip, he is.'

Ellis nodded. 'Talky-talky even at ticket-box,' he replied.

'Yes, sir. Well, I'd gone down to make inquiries about the trains. And almost by chance I mentioned Ford and the murder and all that to old Snell. He laughed, "Wish I'd got his money," he said. "Seeing all the porters capping and running after him now, it seems queer to remember the first day I set eyes on him, ten years ago and more, getting out of the London train and carrying his own black bag." Of course I listened then. And it came out that about that time he'd journeyed backwards and forwards a good bit between London and Upton. "Roach, the guard, would remember him also, I dare say. Indeed he has reason to," Snell told me. "But here's the one-thirty just coming in, with him aboard. I'll tell him to give you the story." And Roach the guard has proved my best friend. For it was from him I got my first clue. As Snell had said, Roach had good reason for remembering Ford's travels.'

Then the narrator paused to consult a little black note-book; and as he stopped Ellis took the opportunity of making an observation.

'Trifle queer nobody in Shoreton having knowledge of past history. See?'

Smart nodded. 'Queer, sir, certainly. Though scarcely cause for suspicion, taken alone. But there are queerer things than that behind, unless I mistake. As to Roach, he told me that on one occasion the black bag which Snell had mentioned was lost on the line. There was a tremendous fuss made and a big reward offered, as it contained documents of value. Owing to certain circumstances with which I need not trouble you, suspicion seemed to point to Roach,

if not as the actual thief, as having been guilty of culpable negligence. However, the bag was ultimately brought back to Ford by a gentleman who had walked off with it in mistake for his own. An absent-minded sort of chap he must have been, for he'd left the one that really belonged to him in a smoking carriage, as it turned out; and since he did not require the papers that were in it for some days he was a good while in discovering the error.'

'Fools some folks are!' grunted the Cynic.

'And more than you'd think, sir,' in ready, though passing agreement. And he immediately harked back to the story, with the sort of persistence that, from the first, Dick had noticed and admired. 'Well, Roach somehow heard that the thing had been restored in consequence of an advertisement in the *Daily News*. Naturally enough he looked that advertisement up; but he could find nothing with the name of Ford attached. The best he could get hold of was an accurate description of the article and its contents which the finder was requested to take to 223c Hatton Garden.'

'Keep the train waiting whilst you discussed all this?' was Ellis's dry inquiry. Whereupon Smart shook his head and grinned.

'No, sir. What with Snell's introduction and seeing me curious, Roach gave me a lift in his van. I fancy he still owes Ford a grudge for the fright he gave him over that job. So when I gave him a hint or two as to me not being particularly partial to Ford, it paid. By-and-by he said he'd hunt up the paper. His wife 'ud have it somewhere stowed away; and if I could make it convenient to meet him at Upton Station next day, he'd give me a sight of it. That was how I got the address.'

'Deserved to get something,' was Ellis's opinion. Having expressed which he waited for more.

'Of course the mere name of Hatton Garden smacks of diamonds and such like; and somehow I at once remembered Ford's ring. Ever noticed that ring, sir?'

Dick nodded again. He himself was wont to declare that, like other savages, he dealt largely in signs. 'Engraved sapphire. Indian setting. Don't admire such things.'

'No, sir? But it is valuable and rare, unless I mistake. And when I went to look at 223c, I wasn't surprised to find that it belonged to a diamond merchant. It was more of an office than a shop; and on a brass plate were the names, "Dixon, late Driver." I went in and asked for Mr Dixon. Fortunately he was out. For instead of him there came his foreman, who seemed to remember everything since the Flood. I asked if he could tell me when a Mr Ford had rented the place. And that set him off. "There's never been a Ford, not within the last thirty years," he said. "Driver gave up in March of '60. He'd been here nigh on three years, and a good trade he did in a few stones such as I've never seen before nor since. Before him it was Moody, and then Jameson. I've been with them all."

'Ford, Driver—Driver, Ford,' said Ellis, as though introducing two strangers to each other. Smart laughed a deep bass chuckle.

'Well, sir, you're right. I made Thomson describe Driver, and, sure enough, he gave me

Ford feature by feature. Only ten years ago he wasn't gray, and he wasn't stout. But when I asked for Driver's present address he shut up. "Never heard it," he said. "He kept it as close as wax when he left." And that's where the strange part of the business lies. A man don't change his name and try at both ends, so to say, to cut off connection between present and future without a cause.'

Ellis got upon his great feet, and with his back to the fire, abandoned himself to deep cogitation.

'That all?' he asked at length.

'No, sir. For I thought I caught a knowing look in Thomson's eye. So I stayed and talked, and gradually it came out. I began, by chance like, upon seaside places such as Folkestone and Margate and Southsea. And at last I said I'd just been hearing somebody mention a little new place called Shoreton. He pricked up his ears at that, and asked if my friend had mentioned a man named Ford. Then I knew the scent was getting too hot for him to hold, and I nodded. So he gave me a confidential poke in the ribs. "If he'd have mentioned Driver he'd have been nearer the mark," he declared. And he went on to say that he'd spent a bank-holiday there a year or two ago, and had himself seen his former master.'

'Pretty conclusive that,' ejaculated Ellis.

'So I think, sir. And that's as far as I can go to-night. I fancy I have hold of another thread; but as to that I can't be sure yet. Magistrates certain to adjourn the inquiry again, I suppose, sir?'

'Dead certain.' And then, with injunctions to Smart to keep him well posted up as to discoveries, he sent the man away, and betook himself to a fresh pipe and further profound meditations. He might have been provided with even more food for thought could he but have followed the detective's subsequent movements.

For Smart's next place of call proved to be a dingy and extremely dirty lodging-house, somewhere near the same quarter of London where already he had been pursuing knowledge. Round Hatton Garden, in the slums that afford them a home, Italian ice-cream vendors and organ-grinders herd together in numbers. And in the same unsavoury locality may sometimes be found men of other foreign nationalities, seeking perhaps to gain solace in the universal brotherhood of exiles.

Whether that reason, however, or some other had induced him to take refuge in this particular quarter, it was at any rate a tall, swarthy person, as little like an Italian as an Englishman, and whom Smart had yesterday thought singularly ill-suited by the black trousers and seedy tweed coat which decorated his lean figure, that the detective was seeking. Nor had he to search far. For his quarry came forward from his lounging stand against a door-post as Smart turned the corner of the street. The Hindu bent himself almost double as the other advanced, in a profound and quite beautiful bow.

'Omar 'ave found the book, Sahib,' he said, speaking curiously distinct and precise English, though with an unequal intonation. 'It is 'ere.' And taking off his hat he produced a small volume, that looked like a pocketbook, from

the lining. Smart regarded it with a sharpness that Omar did not observe. He was more impressed by the carelessness of the detective's nod.

'Ah, that's it, is it? What made you first think that I should care to buy the thing?' he inquired, taking out a cigar-case, and offering a long, dark stick of tobacco to his companion, who accepted the gift with eagerness and another tremendous bow.

'Omar 'ear the Sahib talking to Mr Thomson,' he said. 'Omar sit in the little room inside and listen, time he mend Indian chain. Omar 'ark whilst Sahib say "Driver" over and over and over again, and ask questions. So then Omar sure that the Sahib wish to 'ear tell more of Driver. And 'e remember this small little book in which is much writing. Be'old! look!'

'All right!' with well-assumed indifference. 'By the way, did you ever come across a fellow—one of your own countrymen I expect—called Jehan?'

Omar slowly shook the head which would have been so much more fittingly adorned by a turban than by the elaborately-dilapidated bowler which he displayed.

'Omar not 'ear that name before, Sahib,' he replied after a moment or two. 'Not neither 'ere nor in Calcutta. The Sahib want Jehan too?'

But Smart, who was turning the leaves of the pocketbook, did not pursue the inquiry further. Instead, he returned to the former subject of conversation.

'Where did you get this?' he asked. 'Did Driver give it to you?'

In no way was the astonished detective prepared for the storm that the question suddenly raised. Even in the darkness of the October night, faintly illuminated by a neighbouring gas-lamp alone, he could see the convulsion that passed over the mobile face, and the fierceness with which Omar tossed up towards heaven his long, lank arms and claw-like fingers.

'Give?' he hissed from behind his white and even teeth. 'Give, said the Sahib? Ah, the Sahib knows not Driver! Not one little 'alf-penny! Not one small grain of rice! Omar, 'e 'is servant for years. Omar work for 'im. Omar save 'is life. When 'e say, "Omar come to England," Omar come, for Omar one fool. At 'Atton Garden Omar live with 'im, and make 'is curries and attend on 'im. And then one night 'e say "Good-night, Omar! Ta-ta, Omar!" And that all. Next morning 'e was gone, and Omar was left. Only for Mr Thomson, Omar would 'ave starve. But Thomson good. When the new Sahib come 'e say, "Take on Omar. Omar good to mend fine filigree things." So Omar stay and work, though 'e no more live in that 'ouse. But Omar 'ate Driver! Omar curse Driver! Omar spit upon Driver! suiting a significant action to the words, 'every day and every night.'

The indignant protest came out in a torrent which Smart felt it was useless to endeavour to quell. But spectators were collecting into a crowd, and the locality was scarcely one to make much observation desirable. Smart touched the enraged oriental upon the sleeve.

'I will take the book,' he said. 'And to-morrow morning, at nine, meet me in Trafalgar

Square. I will pay you then,' he added in a cautious whisper.

As both Ellis and Smart had anticipated, next Monday saw the further postponement of Ernest's examination without any progress having been made in the case. And once more Mannering beheld the prison-doors close behind him. Notwithstanding this ill-fortune and the position in which he still found himself, the lover did now permit himself the one indulgence within his power. He wrote to Katie. Poor Katie, doing her best to seem gay and bright as of yore, to convince her uncle that she bore him no grudge because of his treatment of Ernest, and in fact endeavouring with all her might to do honour to the strong, deep love within her by showing herself a better and braver girl because of its existence. How she cried over that sheet of paper that had issued from within the walls that were Ernest's cage! How she kissed it and took it to bed with her, and slept with it next her cheek! How it tore her heart to answer it, as answer it she knew that she must, with denials! How she longed to see and comfort the dispirited, badly treated, cruelly maligned writer thereof, and to feel his strong young arms round her again! And yet, even for the future, she would make no promises but those of constant love and unwavering faith.

'No, my darling, my dearest, I cannot tell you, even to comfort you now, that I will ever disobey my uncle. Ernest, he has been so good to me all my life that I dare not make him a bad return. It isn't that I don't trust you, love. Above all it isn't that I don't love you. I think of you night and day in that dreadful jail, and I wish I were some bird that could look in at your window and sing a song outside. But still, my sweetheart, because one day I hope that God will let me be your faithful, dutiful, and most loving wife, so now I must make myself worthy of you by being faithful, and dutiful, and loving to uncle. Good-night, my dear love. Don't give up hope; but wait for the good time that I'm sure is coming. Wait, and I will wait too.'

And if that wasn't a letter to make of any lover a proud and happy man, what could be? For the moment when first he read it, Ernest was actually glad that she had refused to grant those concessions for which he had pleaded. And though that was a gladness which unhappily—such is human nature—soon evaporated, still he never fell into quite such low spirits and deep dejection as before he received that sweet communication.

But the next excitement which the restless prisoner was to experience took the form of an interview with Smart, whom Ellis brought with him to Upton. It was an interview so full of revelations, and so fraught with suggestions of possibilities, that for days afterwards Mannering almost forgot to be dull, although the chafing against his confinement rather increased than diminished. As to Ellis he was already too fully occupied with Ernest's concerns to be able to attend to other business, and Smart's intelligence only served more completely to engross his thoughts with the one affair. A fortunate circumstance was it for the so-called Cynic that he had been born with a silver spoon of really remarkable size in his red mouth. Had it not so happened, the way he had of taking an absorbing

interest in matters of friendship, like the present, could scarcely have failed to spell ruin for himself. However, upon this occasion, he had certainly sufficient excuse.

For it was during their conversation that Smart produced and displayed the contents of the small volume which he had obtained from Omar. The book had proved to be a pocket ledger, and bore traces of having, at some time, been fastened by a locked clasp. The first entry was dated September 1856, and consisted of a long list of bonds and securities, enumerated in ink of a peculiar colour. Opposite each item, and apparently, judging by the difference in the ink, written at another time, stood the amount which that special property had realised when sold, amounts which added up to an enormous total.

But Ernest, at the first glimpse he caught of the handwriting that filled the pages, gave a quick cry of astonishment, and seizing the book as though it were a possession of his own, turned rapidly to the flyleaf at the beginning. Upon it stood two words, which he read aloud—"Douglas Mannerling." It belonged to my father!—to my father, Ellis. Do you understand?

Smart, who had of course known what name would be found there, although, as he was ignorant of Ernest's parentage, he regarded it rather as a curious coincidence than a circumstance of importance, watched him without any great surprise. But even he was not in any way prepared for the almost solemn glance that passed between the friends, or for Ellis's reply to that impulsive announcement.

'God's doing!' he exclaimed. 'Must get to the bottom somehow. By-the-by, Omar know anything of this?'

'Nothing that can explain it,' Smart assured him. 'He first met Driver in Calcutta, during January '58. Driver had been in hospital three months. He had just come out and was still too weak to stand; he therefore engaged Omar as his servant, and the Hindu did, I should suppose, sir, literally save his master's life by his attention. All that he can tell, however, of the book is that Driver seemed to take special care of it. By some chance he left it behind, though, on his departure from Hatton Garden, and Omar picked it up from the floor of a room where Driver had packed a portmanteau. In his anger he stuck to it, in spite of subsequent police inquiries. But he can't read English, so he is in utter ignorance of the contents. It is strange, Mr Mannerling, that it should have fallen into your hands at last.'

'More than strange! Tell other side story,' said Ellis curtly. And forthwith Smart listened to a strange tale. He heard of a man, known to be of vast wealth during his lifetime, and killed in the Mutiny. He heard of the son, heir to the huge fortune, left absolutely dependent upon the charity of friends, in consequence of the utter vanishment of every trace either of treasure or of investment. 'Now perhaps got the clue at last, thanks to Ford,' cried Ellis, in triumph. 'Dish Ford, rather! Wish by-and-by he'd left Chums' Club alone. The fool!' with an accent of conviction that afforded Smart some secret amusement. But Ernest was intent still upon his investigations.

'You see there are two other schedules here,'

he pointed out. 'The money was expended on jewels by my father, it would seem.'

And there, certainly enough, was another catalogue; but this time the tale told was of gems bought, gems apparently of almost fabulous value, and purchased from strange quarters. Rajahs and Begums, as well as merchants and traders, were named amongst the persons from whom the stones had been procured. And it was noticeable that the sum of the money thus invested almost exactly tallied with that produced by the previous negotiations. So much Ellis observed before, still under Ernest's excited guidance, commencing the scrutiny of a third inventory. Here again the jewels were separately mentioned; but here was chronicled also the price for which each had been sold, together with the names of the purchasers, nearly all of whom were English people. On comparison of the two entries of buying and selling, it became evident that a huge profit had been made; but not by Douglas Mannerling. His transactions had closed with the end of the second schedule, for the third and last had been made out by a different hand. 'Ford's fist,' as Richard proclaimed, turning out the contents of his letter-case and producing the self-same note in which the Mayor had made his memorable appointment. 'Compare the two.'

The matter was not, indeed, open to dispute. Ford, *alias* Driver, had in some mysterious manner become possessed of Mr Mannerling's most private memoranda, together, almost equally surely, with the very portable property to which they referred, and had thereafter devoted every energy to the enrichment of himself. 'And beggar knew what about too,' Richard went on, rapidly turning from page to page, backwards and forwards. 'Whew! "Girdle encrusted with diamonds and large rubies," bought from some crackjaw Rajah, sold to Sir Edwin Bloss. Cool five thousand netted. See?'

Smart nodded. 'And that's not the best, sir. Allow me'—But Dick was still absorbed.

'Ah! "Sapphire set as ring, engraved and hollowed, opening with spring,"' he read aloud. Then he referred to the other schedule and shook his head. 'No entry of sale. Same jewel he wears! Interesting that.'

But now Ernest had a revelation, and suddenly broke in. 'It's what that wretched Jehan meant,' he said. 'Depend upon it he held the clue to the whole secret, and so had Ford in his power. "Jehan see bright stones. Jehan understand where come from. And if Jehan tell"—You recollect, Dick? I repeated it at the inquest. Why, I can hear him shrieking it out now!'

Certainly it was small wonder that the prisoner was agitated, or that the flush of hope already dyed his cheeks. Even to Ellis and to Smart there appeared a rift in clouds that had seemed very heavy and threatening.

'Must find out how Driver or Ford or whatever real name may be, got hold of ledger and stones too,' Dick decided quickly. 'Men don't give away such things as son's fortune. Be millionaire yet, Mannerling! Remember any Ford or Driver in connection with Indian firm?'

'Not in the least. But then I was only a child. Delhi would surely be the best place to make inquiries—eh, Smart?'

'Beginning with the Calcutta Hospital, sir.'

But in Delhi there is just a chance of getting information about Jehan as well as about the jewels. Jehan's acquaintance with Driver could scarcely have happened during his stay in Calcutta, since Omar never met him there. Unless'—

'All conjecture. Better go and see,' peremptorily from the solicitor. 'Be back in time for trial, whatever happens. Understand?'

And so it came to pass that upon the very day when the coroner's jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against Ernest Mannering, and just six days before the magistrates committed that same unfortunate person for trial, Smart took ship for Calcutta, *via* the recently-opened Suez Canal. And Omar, restored to the dignity of flowing robes and a turban, sailed with him, to assist in his search.

As to the precious pocketbook, that was relegated to the most secret recess of Ellis's securest safe. On the evidence which its pages afforded, it was more than possible that his friend's life might depend. It was not a volume with which to trifle therefore.

CHOCOLATE CULTURE IN NICARAGUA AND MEXICO.

By ROWLAND W. CATER.

THE visitor to Nicaragua will not be long in the country before an opportunity to 'sample' Tiste will present itself. It is a preparation of powdered cacao beans, sugar, maize-flour, and water, and may be called the national beverage. Europeans, accustomed to the chocolate of the French and Italian cafés, do not at first care for it, but they soon recognise its virtues. To the poor peon it is often both food and drink, and with a jicara gourd more or less full of it on his back, he will toil contentedly for six or eight hours, asking no other nourishment.

Long before the conquest, a decoction of which the cacao bean formed the principal ingredient was held in the highest favour in Mexico and Central America. The Aztecs called this drink *chocolatl*, and every tribe they subjugated had to bring a certain number of bags of cacao as tribute to the Emperor. The chocolate of those savage conquerors was flavoured with vanilla, even as ours is to-day, but other spices, some of which have not been identified, were used to improve this 'food for a god.'

I am not likely to forget the catastrophe which led to my first introduction to *Theobroma Cacao*, as cultivated on a large scale in Nicaragua, for it was nothing less than an earthquake. Seismic disturbances are common in Central America; and the volcanoes on the flag of Nicaragua are not without meaning. It is a land of volcanoes, and the sonorous names which the Indians bestowed still cling to many of them, telling, as plainly as sounds can, of the awe and dread the ancient people held them in when they were not slumbering, as now, but active and malevolent. Omotepe—Mombacho—Momotombo—the names suggest a rumbling and roaring, fire, and a lava flood that nothing could withstand.

Granada, where I was dwelling in September 1890, stands at the foot of Mombacho. At one time it was the capital, but the jealousy of Leon has made Managua the seat of government.

Granada, indeed, has never recovered from the Filibuster War, when General Henningsen almost razed it to the ground. Before the Revolution, and since, it was a city of palaces. Now it is more or less ruinous.

On Sunday, the second day of that eventful September, I was sitting in the patio, or courtyard, of the house in which I resided, when I suddenly became aware of a muffled roar, not unlike distant thunder, but apparently proceeding from the ground, which quivered under my chair. My companions instantly sprang to their feet.

'Tremblor—Tremblor!' they shouted, and ran through the wide portière into the street. I followed. They, and hundreds more, men, women, and children, were racing towards the plaza, or great square. Hysterical shrieks, cries, and shouts filled the air, which was so thick with dust that I could see no better than in a London fog. The plaza was no great distance, but the vibrating ground made my steps so uncertain that it seemed many minutes before I joined the terrified throng already gathered in that open, and therefore comparatively safe place of refuge. Some, struck down by falling tiles and bricks, never reached it, but the casualties were few.

The roar and the quivering died away, and after a while the people, thinking the danger at an end, began to return to their homes. But I had scarcely reached the patio that I had left so hurriedly when another shock, sharp and sudden, sent us all flying to the plaza again. This was followed at a brief interval by a third and a fourth, each more violent than the preceding one. Stone houses rocked to and fro like poplars in a hurricane; adobe walls cracked and fell; roofs seemed to be stripped off entire; but the huts of the poor, built of timber, with walls of plastered canes, generally escaped. The crash of falling masonry, clanging of bells in the church towers, howling of dogs, cries of children and lamentations of their parents, made an uproar almost indescribable.

A few priests of Spanish blood ran about endeavouring to calm the people; but many cried that it was the Day of Judgment, while others declared that it was heaven's punishment on the inhabitants for visiting the theatre, where an operatic company had been playing *La Mascota*.

The shocks continued at intervals for twenty-eight days—four weeks of panic, desolation, and distress. Those who had haciendas in the country fled thither, leaving their city houses at the mercy of thieves, whom even earthquakes could not restrain from pillage. The government ran free trains to places of safety, so that long before the shocks came to an end Granada was comparatively deserted. Those who remained ate and slept in the streets. I, almost a stranger in a strange land, did not at first know where to go until I bethought myself that I had an invitation from the manageress to visit the 'Valle Menier' cacao estate, situated near Nandaimé, about halfway between Granada and Rivas. Thither I went, leaving my lares and penates in the care of the earthquakes, with small hope of seeing them again.

The 'Valle Menier' plantation is by far the largest and best-managed in Nicaragua, and, as its name will indicate, it is the source of the famous 'Chocolate Menier,' so largely consumed

in France and England. The owners, Messrs Menier Brothers, of Paris, cultivate the cacao in a thoroughly systematic way, and in consequence they have no rivals in Nicaragua, and no superiors anywhere—that is, as regards the quality of their product. The careless, unstudied methods of the native hacendados are scorned at 'Valle Menier,' where the very best machinery available is in use, and nothing spared in order to attain perfection.

Of course the earthquakes, of which Granada seemed to be the centre, were felt in the valley which the Brothers Menier have made so productive, and there was great excitement during my stay; still, I saw enough to convince me that a cacao plantation, carefully and systematically managed, is a very profitable investment. And this I think I shall be able to show.

Theobroma Cacao is a tree of moderate size, averaging when in a wild state from twenty to thirty feet in height. Its deep green oblong leaves vary in length from eight to twelve inches, and are generally about three inches broad. The light red or pale yellow flowers, growing in tufts at the extremity of the branches, are small. On these falling, the gourd or lemon-shaped pod appears. It is about eight inches long by three in diameter, and has a thick, tough rind, light green at first, then pale red, and eventually reddish purple. The pod contains from thirty to forty seeds, closely packed in white pulp. These seeds, after being fermented, rubbed, and cured, constitute cocoa; if they are merely broken up, they are known as cocoa nibs. The soluble cocoa familiar to all is composed of the seeds or beans finely ground and mixed with starch. Chocolate is the same thing, but made up into a paste and flavoured.

There are many varieties of the cacao tree. The Tobasco cacao of the Atlantic slopes of Central America, and the famous Socumusco cacao of the Pacific shore, are obtained from *Theobroma angustifolia*. This is supposed to be the best cacao known, and very little of it finds its way to foreign markets. In addition to Mexico, Central America, and many of the West India Islands, cacao of excellent quality is obtained from the United States of Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Brazil, Ceylon, Madagascar, the Philippine Islands, &c. In British Honduras, *Theobroma Cacao* and *T. angustifolia*, the famous cacao tree of Socumusco, both grow wild. Mr Morris, now the assistant-director of Kew Gardens, saw a number of them on the banks of the Rio Grande, 'with their stems covered with flowers, and often loaded with fruit,' growing 'under the shade of large overhanging trees in deep soil, and in rather moist situations.' British Honduras, therefore, where the most valuable species are indigenous, would appear to be the most favourable of our colonies for a cacao plantation.

In choosing land an elevation of from three hundred to six hundred feet is desirable: the plantation must be sheltered from the winds and the direct influence of the sea-breezes. The cacao will thrive close to the sea-shore, but the site must be sheltered. The well-drained but moist alluvial lands in the river-valleys afford the best soil and situation.

At the 'Valle Menier' in Nicaragua, where I received my first lesson in cacao cultivation, only seedlings, propagated in nurseries, are planted

out. In other places the method known as planting 'at stake,' that is, propagating on the plantation, is sometimes adopted, but this I cannot recommend. When the plantation is intended to be made on lands covered with virgin forest, the first step is clearing a space for the nursery. When the trees and undergrowth have been removed, the soil should be hoed and raked, and all weeds carefully pulled up. For planting, the best-looking pods, not over-ripe, should be chosen. Those known in Mexico as 'hechas' are generally preferred. They are light-coloured and solid, and distinguished from the 'viches' by the seeds not rattling inside. A light tap with a knife handle is the test usually employed.

The seeds should be planted eight inches apart and one inch deep in small furrows, covered with loose, fine mould and banana leaves, and watered lightly every morning and evening for a fortnight, when the seedlings will begin to show above ground. The banana leaves should then be removed, and a roof of palm or other large leaves, raised on sticks, constructed to shield the young cacaos from the sun. This done, the planter may leave them and turn his attention to the land where they will be planted out.

The close of the rainy season is the proper time to begin clearing. This varies according to locality, but in the Rivas district the winter or rainy season—'Invierno,' as the natives call it—commences about the middle of May and ends in the middle of November. In Mexico the rainy season is not over, as a rule, before the end of December. The first step is to mark the valuable timber trees, fell them, and haul them away. The remainder, with the undergrowth, should be cut down, leaving, however, a belt on that side of the plantation which is most exposed to the winds. The branches should be lopped off the trunks, and the whole left a month to dry. When perfectly dry the brushwood and trees should be piled in convenient heaps and burned. It is advisable, however, to sort out such vegetation as will decompose quickly and allow it to rot for use as a fertiliser. When the whole is destroyed by fire, constituents very necessary to enrich the soil are given off and lost.

As the cacao trees require to be shaded from the direct rays of the sun and sheltered from violent winds, it is customary in Nicaragua to leave such trees standing as can be utilised for shade. When more shade is required, cuttings of fast-growing trees called 'Madres de Cacao'—mothers of the cacao—are planted to supply it. The tree generally used for this purpose in Nicaragua is locally known as 'Madera negra.' Various species are used in different places, but the most common perhaps is the *Savonetta* of Trinidad, supposed to be identical with the 'Madera negra.' As a rule these trees serve no other purpose than to give shade, whereas the banana, planted as a shade-tree, will yield fruit as well. I recommend either the banana or *Castilloa elastica*, the india-rubber tree, for this purpose, and give the preference to the latter, as being much more valuable and lasting. It would be a good plan to plant bananas first in rows fifteen feet apart, each tree in the row forty-five feet distant from the next. They spring up directly and afford good shade in six months or less. Then rubber and cacao trees should be

planted between the bananas, thus forming a composite plantation. The bananas die down after fruiting, but are soon replaced from the same roots. When the rubber trees are big enough to shade the cacao, the banana roots might be grubbed up, leaving the rubber and cacao in possession of the ground. The space occupied by the bananas might then be filled up with rubber, or cacao, as desired, when the trees would be fifteen feet apart. As the *Castilloa elastica* is a deep feeder, and proof against the attacks of insects, it is perhaps the best possible shade-tree. The *Castilloas* may be tapped in the eighth year, when they will yield, on an average, five pounds of rubber worth two shillings a pound. The quantity of rubber will increase every year for a certain period, and continue for from twenty to thirty-five years or longer.

To return to the cacao seedlings. When twelve months old they will be about two feet high and ready for transplanting. This should be done at the beginning of the rainy season. Considerable care is necessary. In Mexico the process is as follows: A peon cuts a circle or square round the seedling with a machete, then with a spade lifts up both earth and plant. Another peon stands by with a large leaf, which he wraps round the mass to retain the earth and guard the taproot. Holes two feet square and two feet deep having been dug fifteen feet apart, or that distance from the shade-trees, the young cacaos are carefully placed therein, the holes filled up, and the earth well pressed down. Dried leaves, banana trash, or mixed wood ashes and decomposed vegetable matter should be placed on the top, and the operation is complete.

At two years old the tree, in good soil, will stand five or six feet high: when seven or eight feet high it will begin to bear, and when ten or twelve feet high it will be in full bearing. This will take place in from the fourth to the seventh year, according to situation. In the meantime considerable attention is necessary. Twice in each year the land should be weeded, and the trees must be carefully pruned.

With regard to pruning I quote from a valuable report on the productions of Mexico by Sir Henry Dering: 'As the pods are borne on the larger branches, the principle is to develop such branches and see that they are not covered up by foliage and small twigs. A typical cacao tree should have one stem, giving off at a few feet from the ground three to five branches, which spread in an open manner and are free from leaves except at the top: thus the leaves shade the open inner portion without interfering with a free circulation of the air. If the young plants throw out more than one main stem, the surplus ones must be pruned off when the moon is on the wane; and after the lateral branches are formed, no upward prolongation of the stem must be allowed to grow. If the tree be left unpruned, these upward growing branches will shoot from the stem just below the laterals in the form of suckers, and to leave them on is to cause the strength to be taken from the fruitful laterals, as well as to allow the trees to run up, perhaps for thirty feet or more, thereby causing much trouble in picking the pods. When the suckers are pruned off, fresh ones will grow in a short time, so that the trees will require frequent

attention until they are mature, when the tendency to throw out suckers will be stopped.'

After the flowers have fallen a small pod appears like that of the Chile pepper, maturing in three or four months. The first flowers, however, should not be allowed to produce pods, but should be rubbed off. As the cacao tree blossoms all the year round, the harvest is practically unceasing, but for convenience there are considered to be four harvests, each covering three months. That lasting through April, May, and June is the most abundant. When the pod takes a reddish purple tint it is generally considered to be ripe, but this is definitely ascertained by tapping it with a stick or the knuckles. If it sounds hollow, and the beans are loose, it is gathered.

In the harvesting great care is necessary, or the next fruiting bud, which grows close to the pod, may be knocked off, and the branch rendered barren. When the pod is beyond reach the mozo generally uses a curved blade attached to a pole, and with a peculiar twist removes it without damaging the branch. When gathered, the pods are placed in heaps under the trees for twenty-four hours, then carried to the cacao-house and again heaped up. Round the heaps a number of men, women, and children take their places. With their machetes the men open the pods, which are then passed to the women and children, who remove the beans.

On large plantations, such as the 'Valle Menier,' the beans are then carried to the 'sweating-house,' heaped together, covered with banana or plantain-leaves, and allowed to ferment for from four to six days, according to the season and temperature. To insure thorough fermentation, the heaps are occasionally levelled and remade. Unless this is done the beans in the centre of the heaps will turn black. When sufficiently fermented they are placed on shallow wooden trays and exposed to the sun to dry. Sometimes 'Barbecues,' or yards with a flooring of cement, are utilised. But whether dried in trays or on a floor, the beans should be protected by a movable roof of canvas running on rollers, or a temporary thatch of plantain or palm leaves. When the sun is out the roof is rolled back and the beans are exposed: during rain and at nights the roof is rolled over the trays or the yard, as the case may be. This process is continued until the thin skin covering the beans becomes brittle and may be easily removed.

As the drying is very important, I quote again from Sir H. Dering's report:

'Where they are dried in yards the sweated beans are spread out thinly, well rubbed, and exposed to the sun in the morning, and at mid-day put back in the sweating-house to undergo another partial fermentation, for if they be dried straight off they will deteriorate in value. A peon must turn them over once in a while during the day, so as to expose the whole seed, otherwise one side only will become red and the other black. The second day they are kept longer in the sun, and the third day they remain out as long as the sun lasts. They are put out on succeeding days until they are thoroughly dry, which is told by their producing a crackling sensation when pressed between the thumb and forefinger, or when the outer skin breaks off easily. To brighten the colour to a deeper red, the beans

are washed in a 33 per cent. solution of lemon or sour orange juice. Sometimes the cacao is clayed—that is, sprinkled with red clay that has been dried and pulverised—immediately after they have been removed from the “sweating-house.”

Claying, however, is not advisable, as the buyer can tell immediately when the natural colour of the beans has been artificially heightened. Beans of a deep-red hue sell for the best price, but this should be attained by skilful curing, and not by giving them a coat of clay. The wash of lemon or orange juice is quite harmless. When perfectly dry the beans may be placed in sacks and sent to market.

The yield of a mature cacao tree varies considerably. In Nicaragua it ranges from 3 to 8 lb., and I think 6 lb. per tree may be taken as a fair average. Sir Henry Dering, referring to Mexico, states:

‘Generally one can reckon on 50 pods per tree a year, each of which will produce from 30 to 40 beans, and 250 dried beans will weigh one pound.’ Taking the lowest number of beans per pod, namely, 30, this would give 6 lb. per tree. The trees, if carefully cultivated, will continue in bearing for from 22 to 25 years.

The price varies considerably. Cacao beans sometimes sell for 50 shillings per cwt., and at other times for as much as 130 shillings. Fair qualities may be said to average 75 shillings, but in estimating cost and profit I propose to base my calculations on the low average price of 65 shillings per cwt.

Sir Henry Dering estimates the cost of cultivation at £8, 8s. per acre, which includes the price of the land and all expenses incidental to forming a plantation. In order to be on the safe side, I estimate the cost at a shilling per tree to the end of the sixth year, so that an acre, planted with 193 trees, will have cost £9, 13s. The expenses of harvesting and curing Sir H. Dering places at 2½d. per lb., which is very fair. The following figures will show the cost and profit of one acre of land planted with cacao trees 15 feet apart:

Dr.		Cr.
Cultivation, including cost of land, clearing, &c., for the term of six years, at 1s. per tree.....	£9 13 0	
Harvesting and preparing for market of 1158 lb. of cacao, at 2½d. per lb.....	10 17 1	
Balance.....	13 1 11	
	£33 12 0	
		Yield of one acre, planted with 193 trees, bearing 6 lb. each, or 1158 lb., at 65s. per cwt.....£33 12 0
		Profit, £13, 1s. 11d.

Each successive year, for twenty years or more, the plantation would yield a crop of the same, or greater value, whilst the only expenses beyond those of harvesting would be the cost of two annual weedings, pruning, and occasionally replacing a tree. These £5 per acre would more than cover. The profit, therefore, for the seventh and succeeding years would be £17, 14s. 11d., or 87 per cent. on the original capital expenditure of £20, 10s. 1d. per acre. The figures given by Sir Henry Dering show a cost per acre to the sixth year of £20, 13s., and a net annual profit of

£53, but his calculations are based on 300 trees to the acre, which, in my opinion, is too many. Enough has been written, however, to show that chocolate growing is a very paying occupation.

HER GREAT-GRANDFATHER'S HOUSE.

MISS KINNEAR lived in an old-fashioned little house in the main street of Aberallan. The house had been built more than a hundred years before this by Miss Kinnear's great-grandfather, who had been a saddler in the village, and had also for a term of years been its provost.

This Provost of Aberallan was the real founder of the family to which Miss Kinnear belonged. No other member of the family, before or since his time, had occupied such a distinguished social and public position as had the worthy saddler. Even yet Miss Kinnear talked of her great-grandfather in as intimate and frequent a fashion as if she had been brought up in his house; though, as might have been imagined, the Provost was dead years before Janet Kinnear saw the light.

It was a quaint little house which the Provost had built to receive his young bride. When you entered by the door that was on a level with the street you found yourself in a narrow, dark lobby, paved with stone. If, when you got to the end of this passage, you entered by the doorway on your right hand, you stood within the kitchen, which, indeed, also served Miss Kinnear as eating-room and sleeping-chamber. But if, instead of entering the kitchen, you began to go up the short stone stair that was on your left hand at the end of the passage, you soon found yourself in a little, shady room with a small window. Round the walls of this parlour there were silhouettes of different members of the Kinnear family; and, if it was your first visit to her house, Miss Kinnear was sure, without much delay, to point out to you the black profiles of the Provost and his spouse which were placed in the position of honour above the mantelpiece. There were other works of art adorning the walls—ancient landscapes in which the perspective was almost as hopeless as one finds it in the works of the ‘old masters,’ and sewed samplers that had been worked by various female members of the Kinnear family. This little dark room made a delightful resting-place on a hot summer day. It was not merely charmingly cool, but there was also a fragrant, old-world atmosphere about the quaint apartment. As you sat on the haircloth sofa and looked at the old silhouettes on the walls you felt as if you were living at the beginning of the century, when things went more leisurely and calmly than in these hurrying days. Behind the house there was a court-yard, paved with stone, in the centre of which stood a lime-tree whose leaves were fragrant in the time of summer. Then at the end of the yard a flight of steps led up to a steep garden, filled with wallflower and sweetpeas and other old-fashioned garden stock.

It was no wonder that Miss Kinnear loved this quaint old house. She had lived in it for more than forty years. She was scarcely middle-aged when she had given up her post as head-nurse in Lord Dumbarton's family, and had retired to this little dwelling, which had been bequeathed to her, along with a thousand pounds, by her uncle Duncan.

In the midst of her thankful contentment the old lady sometimes had fears lest she should have to leave this house. She had been steadily using up her small capital all these forty years, so that now she had only a little over two hundred pounds in the bank. What if she should outlive her money? She was now eighty-two years of age, but she did not feel much older than she had done when she was only seventy. She might live to be nearly a hundred, as Nannie Stirling had done. The thought of a life prolonged for fifteen or twenty years longer came with terror to the old woman. But just when she was at the lowest point of her apprehension and fear she had a visit from the agent of the bank of Edinburgh, whose office was next to her house. The banker soon told him business.

'We wish to enlarge our premises,' he said; 'and we should like to acquire this little house of yours.' As he said these last words the banker looked round the tiny parlour with rather a contemptuous expression in his eyes.

Miss Kinnear did not speak. Her mind was full of confused and agitating thoughts. Here was a way out of her money-troubles. But then how could she leave the old house?

'We shall be glad to give you a good price for it,' the banker went on in a complacent tone. 'In fact, to be definite, we'll give you five hundred pounds for the house.'

Still the old lady did not answer. Five hundred pounds! That would put her in a state of financial security for life. And yet at what an expense would she gain this boon.

'Well, you'll think over this offer, Miss Kinnear,' the banker said, as the old lady still remained silent. 'I'll call to-morrow and see what you are thinking about it then.'

Miss Kinnear did not pass a restful night after the banker's visit. She did not know what to think of this offer. It was a very good offer. She knew that probably nobody but those rich bank people would give her as much for her little house. And if she had five hundred pounds in addition to what was still left from her original little fortune, how rich she would be! Then she would not need to dread living to be a hundred.

But she could not bring herself to think of parting with this house. Had not her great-grandfather built it? Had he not brought to it Jessie Burnett, his eighteen-year-old bride? Then her uncle Duncan had left her the house. Would it not be faithless on her part if she let it go out of the family? There was her nephew, Willie, waiting to inherit from her this house. She felt that it would hardly be fair to Willie if she let the house pass out of her hands.

Then this dwelling was full to her of memories of the past. Here her only sister, Marion, had lived with her for twenty years—in this house she had died, murmuring in her last moments, 'Abraham's bosom, Janet; Abraham's bosom!' Would the image of her dead sister not start out of the past to reproach her if she sold this family possession?

My description of the state of mind of Miss Kinnear at this mental crisis in her life may seem exaggerated to those who do not know the feelings of almost religious reverence with which Scotch people of two or three generations back regarded the stone and lime that had been in

their family for years. The great ambition of an old-fashioned Scotchman was to build a house—the great aim of his descendants was to keep it in the family.

When the banker called on Miss Kinnear next day with a confident feeling in his mind that the bargain was as good as settled, the old lady told him respectfully and yet firmly that she had decided not to sell the house. The banker was at first incredulous, then he grew argumentative; at last he lost temper and began almost to threaten this stubborn old person. But it was all no use. So the poor man had to go away, very surprised and indignant at the stiff-necked folly of 'these old women.'

After this Miss Kinnear grew more economical than ever in her housekeeping. Indeed she now seldom tasted butcher-meat. She sustained herself almost entirely on tea and bread. But in spite of this meagre diet she lived in good health till she was nearly ninety years of age, and she died after a very short illness.

I wish I could add that she left only as much money as would pay for her funeral expenses. That would have neatly rounded off this little narrative. But in real life things are not finished off in such trim fashion. When Miss Kinnear died it was found that she had about a hundred pounds in the bank, which, at the rate at which she had been living for the latest period of her life, would have lasted her for another half-dozen years.

NIGHT AT FLAMBOROUGH HEAD.

FIXED in the violet sky, the full-orbed moon
Reflects her borrowed lustre far and wide,
And, in a silver street across the tide,
Gives to the mariner a twofold boon;
The surging waves sigh in with changeful croon,
And ghostly sails into the darkness glide,
While empty boats upon the waters ride,
Rocked to the restless ocean's ancient tune.
Was ever fairer scene, 'neath calmer skies?
The tide ebbs out along its sandy bed,
Through the still hours of somnolence and ease;
But soon the ocean in its wrath may rise,
Till sail and bending mast are watched with dread,
And wrecking gales o'ersweep the furious seas!
SAM WOOD.

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WINTER DAYS IN PARIS.

By MRS M. CORBET-SEYMOUR.

PARIS, as a halting-place on the road to somewhere else; Paris, full to overflowing of summer holiday visitors; Paris, the gay capital wherein life seems only another word for amusement—probably we all know it, either by hearsay or from experience, under one or other of these aspects.

But I shall venture to suggest Paris as a quiet, yet cheery, place of existence in the dreary months of November and December, when London is given over to fog and the country is a damp and vaporous wilderness.

For the life I am about to describe it will be advisable to avoid the newer quarters of fashion—of rich financiers and cosmopolitans—in the vicinity of the Arc de Triomphe. We must cross the Seine to the old Faubourg Saint Germain, where the casual tripper and tourist rarely takes up his abode.

I have in my mind's eye a certain *pension de famille* (and there exist more than one) where are installed every winter some charming members of the old *noblesse*, whose now narrowed income will not permit the keeping up of a house in the capital, and who spend the chief part of the year in a provincial château.

So, about the first of November, they come up to Paris and settle down into pension life—to pensions of undoubted respectability, where no one is received without introduction or reference, and where for two hundred francs per month and per person (and a slight reduction for two persons sharing one bedroom) they have board, residence, and excellent attendance, with only such extras as fire and light in their separate apartment, or those trifling 'odds and ends' that individual taste may require.

Well-informed, well-read people are these winter residents, who can talk intelligently of the last new book, the most popular writer, the most talented artist. Indeed, the pleasant evenings passed in the drawing-room—which a fire

of blazing logs makes cheery—are generally spent in such conversation, for these are persons who take their little bit of gaiety at *matinées* and reserve night for *le home* as they say.

I will imagine a couple of duly accredited Britons arriving at a pension of this class, where they will be welcomed by the proprietors and shown at once to their room—or rooms. With the information that morning coffee and rolls will be served to them there at any hour they wish, that the time for the *déjeuner à la fourchette* is half-past eleven, and that dinner is served punctually at half-past six, they are left to unpack and make themselves at home.

They may feel a little strange perhaps when they first take their places at the long oval table where everything and every one is French, thoroughly French. But this feeling soon passes off, because one's companions are so genial; so anxious to make one feel at ease; so careful to ignore one's wretched mistakes in pronunciation, and to hasten to help one out with the right word which does not come readily to the lips.

This stay will be an opportunity of learning to 'parlez-vous' (as schoolboys say), which could never be gained in that region of Paris where the English and Americans do mostly congregate, or in houses where one's native tongue is professedly spoken.

By ten o'clock in the evening the drawing-room is usually deserted. The ladies retire to their own rooms; the gentlemen who like a visit to the café go out. The next general meeting of the *pensionnaires* is at the half-past eleven *déjeuner* the following day.

Soon after 5 A.M., winter though it be, the chamber-maids are stirring. The French are a decidedly *matinale* people, and like their fires lighted and their chocolate or coffee served betimes.

Up it comes, punctually at the hour requested, and steaming hot; *croissants* or *petits pains* the accompaniment. The Briton may think regretfully the first morning of his ham and eggs, and the substantial furnishing of the breakfast

tables across the Channel; but he will soon like his French fare (which seems to suit the place and the climate) and realise that it is not altogether disagreeable to partake of it in a comfortable dressing-gown by the bedroom fire.

The business of finishing one's toilet follows easily enough after the comforting influences of hot chocolate or coffee; and then comes turning out for a walk while the maids put the room into order. Still early as it will be, we will suppose it nine or half-past, the very best thing to do is to go in to the neighbouring *Bon Marché*; that vast 'magazine' (formerly belonging to Madame Boucicault, but now managed by a company) which has departments for the sale of almost everything you can mention, and somewhere about three thousand assistants to minister to the wants and whims of clients.

It is to the reading-room, however, that I would direct the newly-arrived Briton for the pleasant spending of an hour in the early morning; for here are newspapers—French, English, Belgian, German, American—and here too is writing-paper and every facility for getting through one's necessary correspondence.

When that is done, the sun will be shining brightly (if it means to shine at all), and a walk in the Luxembourg Gardens will be quite compatible with a punctual appearance at the pension for *déjeuner à la fourchette*. Or a stroll along the Quais on the same side of the city is not to be despised, especially by book-lovers, who may chance to find something well worth purchasing on the stalls devoted to second-hand literature which are stationed there.

That morning meal is a very chatty one. Those of the pensionnaires who have been out of doors find something to tell; and those who have remained within disclose their projects for the afternoon. The fare provided is steak and fried potatoes, or perhaps a dish of mutton cutlets; this will be followed by cold meat or meat pâté; cheese, preserves, sponge rusks or other biscuits complete the repast, with the *vin ordinaire*, of which the allowance is half a bottle to each person, and is not an 'extra.'

Some go to the drawing-room after this; the greater number hurry out, for the winter afternoons are short, and if you wish to cross to the other side of Paris you have no time to lose.

I am not proposing to attempt any enumeration of the chief sights to see or places to visit—any guide-book will do that. But I can imagine no more pleasant way of passing many an afternoon than in a careful study of the pictures at the Louvre, beginning with the Salon Carré, which contains the most valuable specimens of art, and passing on gradually to the works of the Italian, Spanish, Flemish, Dutch, and French masters.

The shops in the Rue de Rivoli are a constant source of amusement to loungers. At the corner of the Rue de la Paix there is a renowned pastry-cook's where exhausted nature can be refreshed; even mince-pies and slices of excellent cold Christmas pudding figure there all through the winter months for the consolation of the English.

Close to the Place de la Concorde is the library of Galignani, for the sale of English books and papers, also of Christmas cards for the wanderer abroad to send in greeting to the friends at home. And then a couple of minutes will see you in the

Tuileries Gardens, from which you will regain the pension side of Paris by the Pont de la Concorde and the Boulevard St Germain.

For those who wish to ride there are any number of *voitures*, which you can hire by the hour or *à la course*. In either case there is a fixed price. Before starting the driver should show his number, and in case of any disagreement the police will interfere at once.

The omnibus system is well managed, and enables visitors to reach any part of Paris, as they can change the conveyance at certain points without paying extra fare. A *correspondance* is given to those who ask for it, and the conductor instructs them where they will have to change omnibuses.

Every one in the pension does ample justice to dinner at half-past six, carrying on a lively conversation all the time with his nearest neighbours at the table; the noise may seem deafening to the newly-arrived Briton, but the scene is certainly animated.

The soup—*pot au feu*—always comes first; then some preliminary dish of meat, followed by *rôti* or perhaps fowl. Everything is carved at a side-table and handed round; vegetables, beautifully cooked, are served as a separate dish. On Sundays and Thursdays there is usually some special triumph from the pastry-cook; on other days fruit, preserves, and sweet biscuits form the dessert. And again, as in the morning, there is the half-bottle of *vin ordinaire* for each guest.

During the evening tea is served in the drawing-room to those who wish it. Truth compels me to say that it is weak, washy stuff, a mere *tisane*. The Briton who is fond of a 'good cup of tea' would do well to invest in a packet before leaving home, and bring some apparatus with him for use in privacy.

The French ladies have some pretty work on hand as they chat in the drawing-room; some of the younger ones play dominoes or even loto, and seem to enjoy it vastly. There is always a piano, and almost as invariably some one who can sing some bright little French *chanson* or play the airs from a favourite opera. Every one is pleasant; every one tries to please; and in that lies the charm of an evening in a French *salon*.

Many winter in Paris for a course of painting; others for music or singing.

The author might do worse than choose this quiet quarter of the busy city as a place in which to work out the scheme of his next book.

The student will certainly spend many a happy hour at the Library of St Geneviève, which is open daily from 10 to 3 and from 6 to 10. The printed books number 120,000 volumes; and there are about 30,000 manuscript works dating from the eleventh to the seventeenth century, many being most beautifully illuminated. This library, the reading-room of which will accommodate four hundred and twenty persons, was formed in the year 1624. In 1790 it became national property, and was transferred from the ancient abbey of St Geneviève to its present place.

A visiting-card will obtain for the ardent botanist admittance to the hothouses of the *Jardin des Plantes*, which is closed to the general public in cold weather. The tropical plants collected by Humboldt were added in 1805.

There are three thousand specimens, many of which before that date were quite unknown.

Theatres, concerts, shopping, will amuse those who are not studiously inclined; indeed, the winter days will seem all too short for what one finds to do. The Briton will not say farewell to Paris and his fellow-pensionnaires without regret when the time of his home-going arrives; and, provided he has thawed from his insular reserve, many a sincere wish will be uttered that the next November will bring him back again among the same house-party.

O'ER SEA AND LAND.

CHAPTER V.

NOT many days before Christmas. And the fire in Dick Ellis's snuggerly—a snuggerly which was most mannishly untidy, a queer mixture of luxury and shabbiness, and altogether extremely characteristic of its owner—looked very tempting. But though Richard's feet were upon the mantel-piece and his big person literally toasting in front of the generous blaze, it was not of the comfort of his position that he was thinking. Rather was every idea centred upon the letter which he held; a most surprising, not to say startling, document. It was written upon thin paper, in a small, clerkly hand, and put together in short and jerky sentences that seemed to have about them the echo of Smart's deep bass.

'DEAR SIR—According to instructions, I write to acquaint you with my doings. But I hope to be in England almost as soon as my note, and in plenty of time for the trial. I reached Calcutta safely, and found the hospital of which Omar spoke. After nearly fourteen years of course no one remembered the case. But I saw the registers. They are excellently kept. And I made an extract: "July 23, 1857.—Man brought in, suffering from old scalp wound, aggravated by heat and privation. Found unconscious in street. Shirt bore traces of mark 'J. Blake.' Scrap of *Delhi Gazette* 'Extra,' May 11th, in trousers pocket. Supposed to have been wounded in Mutiny at Delhi, and afterwards escaped.'

But at that point Ellis lowered his legs and sprang up from his seat with a shout. 'Never thought of it! Ford—Driver—Blake! Supposed to have fallen with old Mannering. Escaped though, and carried off plunder. Keen rogue!' He confided his discovery to himself, in audible tones, to the accompaniment of a chuckle so cynical that it alone might have won for him his already-acquired cognomen. But the chuckle died away as he stood in the middle of the rug considering. 'Then villain pretty little girl's father,' he half groaned at last. And therewith he laid down the paper and filled a restorative pipe before continuing the perusal of Smart's communication.

'To this was appended a footnote. "Gave name and address of 'James Driver, Cawnpore,' when able to speak." But I remembered that during our conversation at Shoreton Mr Ernest Mannering had mentioned a Blake, head-cashier to the firm, and murdered at the same time as his employer. The scent seemed getting hot. Then as to Jehan. I made inquiries, and heard that a Hindu of that name, from Delhi, had been asking

about a "Sahib Blake," and generally trying to investigate, about six or eight months since. That, however, was all they knew of him. So, seeing I could make no further progress in Calcutta, I started for Delhi. And there I was in luck. For I routed out an old merchant who had been acquainted both with D. M. and his clerk. By the way, he tells thrilling stories of his own escape and return.'

Ellis impatiently shook the sheet which he held. What cared he for such adventures just now? 'Cobbler'd better stick to last,' he muttered. 'Smart ain't novelist.' But Smart, as it turned out, had not sinned by narrating any of the obnoxious tales.

'He is also able to describe both the men. And, allowing for difference of age, his account of Blake stamps him as the same with Driver and with Ford. Seymour was intimate with M. He knows that before the Mutiny he was realising largely, and investing again in gems. He himself was the agent in the purchase of the Rajah's girdle, now in Sir E. Bloss's possession. And he was able to produce a memorandum from Blake and bearing his signature, conveying a message from M. upon the subject. This I am bringing home. It will be most valuable evidence. It is precisely the same handwriting as that in the ledger, and also in Ford's note.'

Richard Ellis stopped to grunt and to again relieve his excitement, this time by pounding the already blazing coals in front of him.

'Cheerful father-in-law! Bore for Mannering!' he muttered at last. 'Better finish though.' With which he resumed his reading.

'Mr Seymour returns with me to England. He is much interested in the case. A brother of Jehan also comes. Jehan himself was a shady sort of character, well known in Delhi. I find from the brother that they helped Blake to escape. After the massacre they found him just breathing. Mr Mannering had been good to them. So they looked after his friend. Blake promised a big reward, and through their means got off with his loot. To avoid paying he gave Jehan the slip when nearing Calcutta.'

'Just like the low beast!'

'For years they plotted revenge. Some months since Jehan came in for a legacy. This he devoted to tracking out Blake. He meant to wring from him the much overdue recompense. His partial success and its consequence you know. Tippoo was naturally ignorant of both until I enlightened him.'

'If only Katie need never learn about her father,' was Ernest's heartfelt exclamation when he, in his turn, had perused the epistle. And the same idea being already in Ellis's mind, the friends took counsel. True that to spare her altogether would be impossible. Yet that the blow should fall as lightly as possible they were both determined. And the result was that when Mr Denovan, late on Thursday night, returned from a friendly dinner-party at Croydon, where he had left Katie to spend two or three days, he was told that a gentleman was waiting for him in the study.

'Ill news flies,' Ellis informed him before he himself could speak, although the stiffening of his tall figure and the irritation upon his face already showed the sort of welcome that he felt

disposed to offer to Mannering's friend. 'Better sit down. Bad pennies have way of turning up again. See?'

Mr Denovan certainly did not see. But he took the chair which Ellis was offering with a make-yourself-quite-at-home sort of air, and, in his surprise, actually did sit down. After which Dick, in his laconic language and quaint phraseology, told his story. For all Ellis's peculiarities of diction his meaning was usually plain. It certainly was so now. And gradually, as the listener grew to understand the whole affair, the white head sank, and a trembling hand was raised to cover the shamed face. For the tale carried conviction of more than its own truth to the vicar's soul.

'So he rewarded his benefactor as might have been expected,' he groaned at last. 'And I, sir, I have been as bad in my own way as he. I acknowledge it. In my jealousy I have been as ungrateful as Jabez Blake. And now I must watch Katie suffer. It is my punishment. May God forgive me!'

There was a silence which Dick did not care to break. In truth he had no idea of the foreboding which was pressing upon Mr Denovan's soul. But at last the clergyman began to speak again.

'She loves the lad, and now he will not desire her. Yet still I must confess my own sin. You can tell him what I say. I never meant him, from the first, to have her. Only I waited for an excuse to get rid of him, so that she should not think me cruel to her. She is my darling, my ewe-lamb, and I was jealous that any should rob me of her affection,' dwelling on the repentant words. 'Ah, my family has treated your friend well, Mr Ellis, and nobly repaid Douglas Mannering's goodness! I cannot wonder that his son should wish to have no more to do with us.'

'Oh come, Ernest not that sort,' broke in the other at this point. 'Much ado about nothing. Shouldn't take up such fancy. May tell Mannering all right now, then? Won't refuse—send about business—when comes out?'

And Mr Denovan shook his head. 'I shall be thankful to receive his pardon. Katie is pining, though she thinks I don't see it. Only help me to save her from her worthless father.' And as that was an undertaking that Ellis was eager to give, he forthwith proceeded to make sundry suggestions, of which the chief had to do with a long honeymoon, to be begun as soon as circumstances permitted, and to last until the talk and gossip inevitable to the affair should be over.

And thus the day of the trial drew on, until the morning arrived when, in a crowded court, Ernest Mannering was arraigned on the fearful charge of wilful murder. No whisper had been circulated as to the line likely to be adopted for the defence, beyond that already made public by Ernest's own evidence at the inquest. And, in his ignorance, the sole witness for the prosecution gave his testimony as unfalteringly as ever. Nor even under the severe cross-examination of Sir William Caxton did he swerve in the slightest degree from his short and simple tale. As he sat down and, with a slight smile upon his lips, resorted to his familiar trick of playing with his signet-ring, he was conscious that the effect which he had produced upon the

jury was one altogether detrimental to the prisoner. And then?

Then during the next hour spectators saw the Mayor's hard face grow white and his strong body droop gradually forward, as though under the effect of some crushing weight. But he himself seemed regardless of all such outward trivialities. Indeed from the moment when the defending barrister began to trace out a career which had for years been one of unbroken secrecy and sinful success, Blake sat with the right hand clenched hard over the left, guarding his ring, as people were wont afterwards to declare, but otherwise apparently oblivious to all external things. Whether he was aware of what was passing around him, whether he even consciously distinguished the words that were continuously poured out upon the silence of the court, who shall say? There were so many memories which in those moments must have passed across his brain. A shop in Hatton Garden, with the glitter of the precious stones for which he had sold his soul; a ward in the Calcutta Hospital, quiet and cool and restful after the lush vegetation of the jungle; a bungalow in Delhi, with his master's voice piercing the outside din, as Douglas Mannering said solemnly, 'I appoint you my trustee. If you are spared you will take Ernest home his fortune;' and finally, the slash of cold steel across his warm flesh, the vision of dusky faces, the noise of demoniacal shrieks, becoming gradually so real to him that the fancy aroused him from his dream with a start. The barrister had just sat down. Omar was standing to swear to the finding of the ledger. Whilst after him, in single file but in truly awful procession came, one by one, Mr Seymour, the brother of the murdered Jehan, even his own brother-in-law, to tender their evidence against him.

But what need can there be to follow further the proceedings of that day? From the moment when Sir William called his first witness the result was a foregone conclusion. And the judges did not rise until Ernest Mannering, amidst quite illegal and much to be deprecated applause, was triumphantly acquitted; nor until the Mayor of Upton had been arrested in his place.

And that is really the end of my story. For Jabez Blake, *alias* James Driver, *alias* Thomas Ford, was never sentenced to the punishment due to his crime. And when the world heard that he had been found dead in his cell, killed by some subtle Indian poison which had been concealed in the hollowed sapphire of his ring, Ellis was not the only person to think and say, 'Poor wretch! What a life to pass! Carrying death about all the while, everywhere.'

'Imagine the perpetual state of fear such a thing implies,' remarked Ernest. 'He must have felt as nervous as—as a flea. And he to have had Katie for a daughter!'

At which climax Dick laughed. 'So not going to fight about money?' he said quizzically. 'Come to amicable arrangement out of court?'

'As though we could do anything else,' was the rather indignant retort. 'Do you suppose that we care whether it belongs to her, or to me, or to both of us?'

'Wouldn't have belonged to either, old chap, but for Chums' Club,' declared Dick. 'Expect

Ford 'ud have lived in odour of sanctity half-a-century, then given fortune to found home for Hindu refugees or something. Better have let sleeping dogs lie, and left Chums' Club alone. See?

RAILWAYS AND LOCOMOTIVES.

By C. FAIRBAIRN.

A GREAT statistician has recently alleged that since the introduction of railways the working power of man in this country has been doubled. This, as one of the results of railways, is sufficiently remarkable, and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to enumerate one tithe of the benefits which they have conferred on the world. They have proved to be the introduction of a new era in history, far surpassing in usefulness all that ever existed or even was thought of before, or that their most sanguine originators could have imagined possible; and it is generally conceded that to the locomotive engine a large proportion of that success is due.

George Stephenson is credited with the prediction that in time 'the working man would find it cheaper to travel by rail than to walk;' and the prophecy has been amply fulfilled. Parliamentary trains, carrying passengers at one penny per mile, were started in 1844; and a recent statement showed that the average fare on British railways is about three-fifths of a penny per mile, while in 1892 passengers on certain specified morning and evening trains in London and its suburbs were carried at the rate of one-third of a penny per mile. Travelling in Great Britain is perhaps cheaper than in any other country where railways are in use.

It can easily be imagined that Stephenson, notwithstanding his enthusiastic hopes and prescience, would have hesitated to predict what is perhaps more wonderful: That railway companies would become great manufacturers, and employers of labour on a scale hitherto unknown—making their own steel rails and all the accessories for the permanent way, engines, carriages, telegraphs, &c. That they would possess fleets of steamships to augment their traffic beyond seas. That large towns would spring into existence from villages round their junctions and termini, and old cities dwindle and decay from want of these advantages which railways give. That within two generations railways would, from their inherent forces, dominate our national life. That railway capital would amount to one thousand millions sterling, and the length of railways to twenty-one thousand miles, and carry every year fifteen hundred millions of passengers, and that all these passengers should travel in perfect comfort and safety without confusion or trouble. Could there be imagined a more extravagant fairy tale than that furnished by the rise and progress of railways?

The history of the locomotive may be said to have begun with the opening of the Manchester and Liverpool Railway. Previous to that time it was comparatively of small value; for in these early times the arrangements and applications in its details were mere 'rule of thumb' contrivances—the results of pure chance, from necessities which experience developed. For instance, the combination of the tubular boiler with the blast-pipe was

a happy thought, and, it is well known, produced unexpected results, which made the locomotive a success, and established henceforward the permanent type of engines for railways. There can be no doubt that from trials made with the two blast-pipes—one from each cylinder—and the subsequent conversion of the two pipes into one central to the chimney—a great improvement, both in efficiency and economy, was made; but the change was made from motives of convenience, although the combination made the locomotive essentially the same machine it is to-day with all its marvellous power and speed. These two items—the tubular boiler and blast-pipe—when combined were so near perfection that until the present time they have remained unaltered. Robert Stephenson was the pioneer in locomotive construction, and for years every new engine sent out from his works in Newcastle-on-Tyne had improvements in its construction, suggested by experience gained in actual working.

All the improvements which have been made on the locomotive engine since Stephenson's time are principally matters of detail—such, for example, as gave it more tractive power, and made it capable of taking heavier loads, the addition of Giffard's injector, and later, of the direct-acting steam-pumps, by means of which the boiler can be fed with water while the engine is working or at rest, was an important one. The compound principle, too, which has done so much for the marine engine, has been applied to the locomotive, but not with the same result, for the marine engine expands its steam by passing it through two or more cylinders until it is released when below atmospheric pressure, but the steam escaping from the second or expansion cylinder of the locomotive must have sufficient pressure when it escapes as will give adequate draught through the furnace by the blast pipe. In the former the value of the fuel is greatly increased, equal to three- or four-fold, while in the latter the saving is from fifteen to twenty-five per cent. Against this saving there is the cost and maintenance of another and larger cylinder, with valve motion, &c.

The modern locomotive engine is without doubt the finest and most perfect example of mechanical engineering we possess—of great power in the smallest possible compass. Perhaps, too, it is the best example of the application of mechanical principles to a given purpose; and with so many clear-minded and quick-witted men, as those locomotive engineers are, continually on the watch for any chance or possibility of improvement in any detail, it can scarcely be wondered that the locomotive is such a marvel of energy and speed. At the same time it would almost seem as if there was as much disparity of opinion among locomotive engineers as is proverbially said to exist among doctors. Within the past few years, especially since the races of 1896 between London and Edinburgh, some magnificent specimens of engines have been built, and each railway has some structural details different from all the others, as well as in external appearance. Some engineers will not adopt the bogie for the leading wheels; others refuse to find any advantage in the compound engine; some prefer outside cylinder engines, while others believe inside cylinders are more economical, and make the steadiest running engine; and nearly every size

of driving-wheels has been tried, ranging from four to ten feet in diameter.

Everything connected with railway travelling must give way to speed, and so every line has special express engines, magnificent structures all of them, and showing clearly how much locomotive improvement has advanced within the last few years; they are capable of running seventy-five or eighty miles an hour. Here it may be well to mention a fact—although hardly coming within the scope of this article—which is not generally known, and explains briefly and in a few words where the great waste of heat occurs in the use of steam as a prime mover. Notwithstanding all that the steam-engine has done and made possible, and while it is pronounced, as a whole, the finest invention we have, yet it is in its best form a costly and exceedingly wasteful machine. Steam yields its power by its fall from a higher to a lower temperature while doing work. In the locomotive furnace we have say 3000° of heat, but inside the boiler we can get only 300° , for the water will not take up more heat; steam entering the cylinders at 300° , it escapes at say 100° , thus leaving the effective fall in doing work equal to 200° or one-fifteenth of 3000° —the heat in the furnace—while the remaining fourteen-fifteenths of the heat escapes by the chimney without doing any work whatever. There is no prospect of any, even moderate, reduction in the cost of steam as a prime mover in the future; and it is more than probable electromotive engines, which are much less wasteful and supply power more easily applied, will take the place of steam, especially if more convenient and cheaper sources of electricity can be found, or storage batteries so improved as to permit no leakage. Each carriage or truck could thus have its own motor, for no special locomotive would be wanted, and rails and plant could be made much lighter.

The possibilities which lay in our railway system were certainly made much better known to us by some recent experiences. In the year 1888 the famous races between London and Edinburgh were run by two of the great lines leading north and south; and to them was due the acceleration of all the express trains in the different countries where railways exist to any extent. A correspondent of the *Times* newspaper, referring to the race to Edinburgh in a discussion of the races to Aberdeen from London during 1895, says: 'The effect of the "Race to Edinburgh" has been felt all over the railway world. If since 1888 the French railways have shortened the journey between Paris and Calais by about one hour; if Vienna is something like ten hours nearer London than before; if in America trains now run at a speed unknown even in this country, it is to the race to Edinburgh that the impulse is due. This being so,' he continues, 'we are entitled to regard the new race to Aberdeen which has lately begun, and this time almost unnoticed, as of real public interest.' Great Britain is fortunate in possessing three great lines running north and south, known as the East Coast, the West Coast, and the Midland. The Midland has never taken any part in the competition for the tourist traffic nor in the races to the north. The two coast lines, on the contrary, have always been in a state of chronic rivalry, but it occasionally breaks out in

a way that is hardly justifiable, or even desirable, in view of experience at Preston recently. Certain trains leave London on the two lines at the same time, and as they meet in Edinburgh, every facility exists for keen competition. Each of these railways possesses certain advantages which equalise their separate conditions.

The West Coast route, which is run over the London and North-Western and Caledonian Railways, besides being eight miles longer than its rival, has some severe gradients between Preston and Edinburgh, including a flight of seven miles up Shapfell, with eight hundred feet to climb, besides another climb on the Caledonian line of some miles, and over 1000 feet in height. The advantage it possesses is that the tender can be filled with water from troughs between the rails, and without causing any delay. The East Coast route is over the Great Northern, the North-Eastern, and the North British Railways. The line has no heavy gradients, and is, as mentioned, eight miles shorter. For a long time the two lines ran the distance in $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours, but in 1888 a series of competitive runs was made, and the 400 miles were ultimately covered in $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours. At that time this was considered quite beyond anything ever done before in railway travelling, but the work done in 1895 and 1896 between London and Aberdeen, with the same or a similar class of engines, quite puts the 1888 runs in the shade. The distance between London and Aberdeen by the West Coast route is 540 miles; and the East Coast—which has been shortened by the erection of the Forth Bridge—is now 523 miles, or a distance in its favour of 17 miles. Hitherto, and until the 22d June 1895, the West Coast trains ran the distance in 11 hours 50 minutes, and the East Coast in 11 hours 35 minutes. The concluding run was done by the former, 540 miles in 512 minutes, or 8 hours 32 minutes, and by the latter 523 miles in 520 minutes, or 8 hours 40 minutes, a saving of over three hours. Some of the runs over long distances averaged 68 miles an hour, and there was some extraordinary work done on both lines. In 1888 the journey between Preston and Carlisle (90 miles) was run in 90 minutes, but in 1895 the time was 79 minutes, or 68 miles an hour. Leaving stoppages aside, the average speed between London and Carlisle was 65 miles an hour. The East Coast also gave some startling results. The distance between Newcastle and Berwick is 68 miles; it was run in 61 minutes or 67 miles an hour. Nothing up to that time ever approached such long distances run in so short a time. Of course, every advantage that could be gained was taken possession of. The loads taken by the engines were made as light as possible, and a greater number of passengers in one train might give its opponent on the rival line a decided advantage in the race. As usual, no sooner had the news been flashed across the Atlantic, than the American locomotive engineers prepared to surpass this, the latest and highest record, which they now claim to have done. For instance, a train on the Atlantic City Railroad has in parts of the way reached a speed of 82 miles an hour.

A Caledonian early morning train from Carlisle to Aberdeen exceeded some of these records. For 20 miles the average was 72.8 miles an hour (Elvanfoot to Strawfrank), and for 2 miles 81.6

miles (between Crieff Junction and Auchterarder). The engine was the Dunalastair, made in 1896, which, in addition to extra large cylinders, has the largest boiler of any locomotive in this country. In ten years the Caledonian has reduced the time from Carlisle to Aberdeen from 7 hours 22 minutes to 4 hours 31 minutes. At the St Rollox Works, Glasgow, about sixty new engines are turned out in a year, besides which 950 are maintained always in steam.

As was to be expected, there has been a good deal of friendly rivalry between American and English locomotive engineers in improving railways, and especially locomotive engines in regard to their power, speed, and economical working. American engineers maintain that English locomotives with their boilers mounted on, and riveted to a rigid frame, are rendered unfit for any but the most perfectly constructed permanent way, such as is made in this country alone; that the system is not at all suitable for the rougher roads of new countries, and that it is 'unyielding and hidebound,' is their verdict. The American locomotive, on the other hand, is designed—they claim—to work on any railway, and is suitable for the cheaply made and rough lines constructed in new countries. The making of a railway in the United States is not by any means the complicated and costly matter it is in this or any other European country. It is generally commenced by what may be called an experimental line, that is, of the roughest and cheapest description possible. A trial of a few years shows whether the line is likely to prove remunerative or the reverse. If the former, it is gradually improved out of its returns; if the latter, it is abandoned without great loss to any one. Some of our colonies are said to be making their railways in the same way; and hence the favour with which the American locomotives are regarded by the colonists.

In the matter of speed the American locomotives are the only rivals we have. According to published accounts, a speed of 90 miles, and even more, is frequently made in an hour. The English railways are universally acknowledged to be better constructed and better managed than any others in the world. At the same time they have cost from five to six times more than the American lines, and a large proportion of the difference has been expended in providing safety appliances of all kinds, with the result that during the last six years, and allowing for equal mileage run in the two countries, there has only been one passenger killed on English for four and a half on American railways. This, however, is largely due to the influence of the Board of Trade, which exercises great control over our railways, as well as many other industrial organisations where the comfort and safety of the public may be jeopardised. Meanwhile, under competition no doubt, railway companies are doing all in their power to make travelling more comfortable and secure, even for third-class passengers. Lavatory and corridor trains are being largely introduced. Warming the carriages by steam in winter, and lighting them by gas and the electric light at night, are a few of the improvements which have rendered railway travelling more comfortable—we might say more luxurious.

In the near future there are great changes

impending. Many think the locomotive has now nearly done its work, and done it well; but in view of the wider application of railways, climbing up the faces of and over the summits of mountain ranges, tunnelling under seas, rivers, and great cities, we want more adaptable and convenient sources of power. The next few years will, in all probability, bring into operation methods of generating, storing, and applying electricity on railways, of which at present we have no conception. Many ingenious and skilful minds are now working at problems in this direction, which, when solved, will help our race onward in its civilising career. For instance, the electrical expert of two great American companies has produced an electrical locomotive which will, he says, be equal to running 150 miles an hour on a suitable track.

Railways are, and have been great teachers: every one travels now, and so knowledge is spread broadcast, and distant and near parts of the country are brought together. They have developed and concentrated the energies of the people, and so increased their comforts, wealth, and means of social intercourse. They have given increased facilities for trade and manufactures of all kinds, creating new, and stimulating old industries, and fostered cheap and wholesome literature, and are helping to fulfil the old prophecy, 'Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.'

A DESERTER.

By REGINALD HORSLEY,

Author of *Hunted Through Fiji*; *The Yellow God*, &c.

THE proud Tecumseh had called his red brothers to arms. The voice of the prophet, the voice of Ellskwatawa—the fire that rushes through the land—had shrieked denunciations, and foretold the doom of the invader of the red man's territory, the exterminator of the red man's race. Everywhere throughout the Gulf-region the dogs of war were loose, and two races flew savagely at one another's throats. Hamlets burned; villages, abandoned, fell in ruins; white men, horribly tortured, suffered at the stake; red men fell in their thousands, shot, bayoneted, bludgeoned, until at last the fury of the unequal contest slackened, and the Indians, broken and despairing, their trusted leaders slain or captive, laid down their arms and swung sullenly from the land of their fathers.

It was early in 1812 that General Floyd, with his little army of Georgian volunteers and four hundred friendly Indians, took up his position on the heights above the swamps of the Chillabee in Alabama. It was supposed that a large force of Creeks was lurking in the vicinity, though the keenest eyes among the scouts had hitherto failed to discover the exact whereabouts of the cunning foe. But Floyd was too good a soldier and too experienced in Indian warfare to be deceived by appearances; and, notwithstanding the outward calm, made most careful preparations against surprise. Pickets were doubled, patrols moved incessantly to and fro; and, though wearied by his long march, a brief hour of sleep was all the watchful commander allowed himself to snatch.

Far away on the outermost line of sentries Amos Duerden stood on guard. Still as a statue,

he leaned against the trunk of a great tree and peered into the thick darkness that surrounded him, or strained his ears to catch the faintest sound that might break the oppressive stillness. Bravest where all were brave, strong of muscle and stout of heart, there was no one in his army in whom Floyd reposed more confidence than in Amos Duerden; none who might be trusted so well to stand firm and do his duty, though death came to him in the doing. Therefore it was that he had been selected for this lonely outpost, the most dangerous of all, where his firmness and knowledge of the country would stand the white men in good stead against the craft of their dusky foes.

Yet were the thoughts of Amos not altogether with the army. Twenty miles away to the north-west lay a little village, never destined to attain to the dignity of a town, which bore the picturesque Indian name Whispering Pines. Towards this Duerden's heart turned as he kept his watch; for there, waiting until the war should be over, waiting in fear and trembling for her lover's safety, lived Agnes Brotherton, his wife that was to be.

No wonder Amos was anxious, for rumour had it that Whispering Pines was in the track of the Creek advance, and if that were so— He put the thought from him as one too horrid to be entertained.

Away to his right a brook, murmuring mysteriously, rolled through the blackness; but, save for that slumberous sound, all was still. Ahead, behind, in front, all around was inky black; but above, through the dark boughs of the pines, the stars looked down upon the watcher, and ever and anon one fell, streaming like a signal-rocket athwart the sky.

'Tis monstrous dark here,' thought Amos, straightening his tall form, and grasping his musket firmly at the sound of a twig snapping somewhere away to the left. 'A man might be slain here ere he knew he was attacked.' Then, as silence reigned once more, 'I trust all is well with them at Whispering Pines. If Agnes and her mother had but followed my advice and moved north out of this accursed country I should have no fear. As it is'—

Again a twig snapped suddenly—this time at his very feet; and, almost before he could recall his straggling thoughts, a dark form rose swiftly from the ground and a hand was laid lightly upon his lips.

'Steady!' breathed a voice in his ear, so low that he could scarcely catch the articulate words. 'Steady! All's well. I'm Rivington. Who are you?' Before Amos could reply the man went on, 'The Redskins are coming on in force. They are not much more than five miles away. They have swept through Whispering Pines and cleaned out the village. Not a soul left, I'm told. But they brought away some women prisoners. Agnes Brotherton is one of them. If you see Duerden, tell him. I'm off to let the General know. I think they'll attack about daybreak.'

He dropped to the ground and glided away, while for an instant Amos drew himself up against his tree, stiff with horror. There could be no mistake; Mark Rivington was too careful a scout for that, and he was an old friend of

Duerden's too. Hence his anxiety to impart his fateful news to the first man he met. And the enemy were but five miles away, and coming on in force. The camp would be attacked. What of that? What was that to him? Agnes! Agnes was in the hands of the brutal Redskins. Rivington had heard that. Rivington had heard that, and yet had done nothing to save her. In the bitterness of his grief and dismay Amos cursed the friend, who, not recognising him in the dark, had imparted this gruesome news.

As these wild thoughts coursed through his brain, yet another sound, close to him, startled him. No rustling branch nor snapping twig this time, but a dull, smashing sound, a low moan, and silence. Then a sudden rush, a swish, a sharp thud as the keen blade of a tomahawk was buried in the trunk of the tree an inch from his face, and Amos found himself hugged against the brawny chest of a greasy savage, whose hot breath panted against his cheek, and who strove mightily to bring him to the ground. His musket dropped to the ground at the shock; but with a twist Amos freed his left arm and drove his knife deep into the throat of his assailant, who sank with a gurgling sob to the ground.

'One!' muttered Amos grimly, and waited for the next. But none came, and presently he became aware that, whatever his purpose, the Indian had been alone. Then it flashed upon him—'Rivington! The Redskin was after him. The spy had been spied upon. Mark, where is he?'

Cautiously he moved in the direction of that first ominous sound. Not far; for ere he had gone a dozen paces his foot struck against something soft and yielding. He stooped down, groping, and his hand touched the body of a man. He felt for the face, and drew back his hand wet with something warm. And then he knew. His friend, Mark Rivington, bold and trusty scout, lay dead beside him, slain by one more crafty than himself.

One moment Amos spared to lament his lost comrade, and then he sprang to his feet, remembering the dead man's last message. Women prisoners had been carried off. Agnes was in the Creek camp. Even now she might be— He thrust the thought from him and sped with swift, silent steps in the direction indicated by poor Rivington as the position of the foe.

Suddenly he stopped. What was this he was about to do? He was a soldier, and behind him lay his post; the one spot of all others which the Creeks would choose for their point of attack, should they make it at dawn. That the attack was contemplated he knew. He alone of all men, now that Rivington was gone, possessed the fateful knowledge. Floyd, though he had not neglected precautions, was secure in the belief that the Indians were far away. Only through Rivington could the mistake have been corrected, and now Rivington was dead the secret was in the possession of Amos and none other. The lives of some two thousand men were in his keeping. Floyd trusted him; his comrades slept at ease, relying upon his skill and caution; and now he was about to betray his trust, to sacrifice them for an end of his own.

Behind him lay his duty—his duty, wherein till now he had never failed. Before him lay his hopes, shadowy, undefined, forlorn; for that he

could reach the Creek camp ere death, or worse, had overtaken his Agnes was almost beyond the bounds of possibility.

But, slightly probable though it was, there was yet the bare possibility; and, oh God! to picture her there alone, weeping, despairing, praying, waiting for the help that he alone could bring; for he alone knew of her desperate position. He thanked God that she knew not that he knew. He cursed himself that he should hesitate for one moment between his duty and his love. He execrated the General who held him bound to his post by every tie of honour. He questioned of himself with bitter emphasis what concern of his were the lives of the two thousand men behind him, men of whom nine out of ten were unknown to him, when the one life, dearer to him than those of thousands of millions of others, dearer to him than all the world, was at stake. Why should he hesitate? He was bound by no stringent military rule. He was but a volunteer, who had joined more for the sport of the thing than for aught else. He, at least, had no personal wrongs to avenge. He had no quarrel, save that of race, with the persecuted Indian. Not until now. And now Nemesis, following with swift foot, had overtaken him, and Nature was to avenge her slaughtered children. Why should he stay? Were there not other points at which the Creeks might make their attack? Were there not other scouts beside poor Rivington, who might have borne the news to Floyd, who might even now be alert and preparing? Were there not other sentries who could and would give the alarm as well as he? Might not, after all, Rivington have been mistaken as to the threatened advance? It was natural that on seeing the Creeks in force he should suppose them about to move to battle. But what less likely? Their successes had not been so conspicuous as to hold out much inducement to them to attack a strong position. Most likely they were but a marauding party moving on. Moving on! Moving away! And bearing Agnes with them! The thought unmanned him and he sank to the ground, covering his face with his hands.

The brook babbled on to join some mighty river, the breeze that followed the advent of midnight began to stir among the trees; here and there the notes of a night-bird broke the stillness sharply; the stars looked down upon him in their calm, pitiless fashion, and still Amos sat there, neither returning to his post nor moving forward to the succour of his love—sat there, inert, helpless, unnerved, struggling weakly between the calling voices of love and duty.

But the balance was all on the side of love; and, at last, as out of the darkness, came a suggestion. He sprang to his feet once more, tightened the belt of his tunic, and, casting his duty to the winds, hastened with swift though stealthy feet in the direction of the Creek encampment.

For a beam of light had illumined the darkness of desolation that sat upon his soul, and in spirit he asked himself, 'Why not do both? The Indians will not attack before dawn in any case, for the difficulties in their way are too great. Long ere that I can reach their camp, perhaps save Agnes, and be back again in ample time to give the alarm. I can say that I found cause to advance, and the news I bring will be my excuse

for leaving my post. After all, I am not leaving it; I am but extending it. It is better for every one that I should go forward.'

He clutched at the thought with the desperation of a man drowning in a sea of indecision; and, stopping no more to argue with himself, went on as rapidly as the darkness would allow.

Well for him that he knew the country. There were landmarks visible to him, deep night though it was, that few white men beside himself could have recognised. There was the brook upon the right; the great bald mountain, amidst whose crags he had so often hunted, upon his left; the very stars, of whose names he was ignorant, were as signal-lamps to guide him on his way. And so he pushed on and on, through the miry swamp, in and out of the deep pine-woods, over the brook, across the sinuous river by fords known to few, until he came to the edge of a fringe of forest, beyond which he could see a multitude of twinkling lights. And by these he knew that his enemies and he should soon be face to face.

He had judged aright, it seemed. No movement was visible in the hostile camp, and it was evident to him that, if an attack were contemplated, some hours must elapse ere it could be made. But, so far, all was quiet; and slowly, cautiously, as one who takes his life in his hands, he crawled on, keeping a wary eye for sentinel or picket as he went.

But he saw no one, heard nothing, and as he moved along a great wonder filled him. For the fires were burning low, and none came to tend them. What was the meaning of this utter silence, this lack of life? The Indians were not used to be so careless as to sleep unguarded. It was not their wont to court surprise.

And then he knew—remembered certain strange, weird sounds in the forest, to which in his frenzied excitement he had paid no heed; remembered, and in that bitter moment recognised, their meaning. While he was absorbed in his own sad thoughts the Creeks had broken camp, and even now had taken up their position in front of Floyd.

His face sank between his hands as he crouched there, and a wave of great shame overwhelmed him. So it was for this result he had turned his back upon his post; it was for this that he had persistently refused to hear the clear-voiced call of duty; it was for this that he had sacrificed his honour, lost his right for all time to hold up his head in the sight of brave and honest men. He had betrayed his trust but to find his journey idle after all. He lashed himself with bitter upbraids. For him to be so taken in! Was it likely that a war-party, intent upon battle, would burden themselves with prisoners? He ought to have known better. Whispering Pines was, no doubt, in ashes; Agnes, too surely, dead. And he, by this vain pursuit, had lost not only her—that was already accomplished—but all that hereafter might make life sweet as well.

He flung himself face downwards upon the damp ground, not striving to stay the harsh dry sobs that shook his body. He was a strong man in despair, and, so, weaker than the weakest woman. He could not get back, he knew, though it might be the Indians would not attack before dawn, and dawn was yet far distant. But even so, how could he break through the cordon

of red men, even now surrounding the devoted Floyd? That was impossible. To make a long circuit was equally impossible in point of time. No; all was lost—Agnes, his honour, his comrades, his General. He alone would remain to tell the story of that shameful night. Should he? No, never. At least he could die, even as those he had brought to their death. The thought comforted him somewhat, and he rose to his feet.

His decision was instant, his action prompt. With a rapid movement, he drew from his pocket a piece of cord, tied one end round his foot, and attached the other to the trigger of his musket. Then he put the muzzle in his mouth.

For an instant he stood, eyes closed, breath coming and going rapidly, for even to a brave man death comes not wholly without terror. 'Agnes!' he sighed. A strong shudder shook him, and he dashed the muzzle from his face, and flung the musket to the ground.

'My God!' he exclaimed, half-wrathfully, half-fearfully, 'what was I about to do? If I must die, let me meet death as a man, not as a coward. It is not yet too late. It cannot be. It shall not be. I will go back. I will break through the Creek lines somehow. I may redeem my honour in part; if not, then let death come how he will, but not by my own hand.'

The darkness of the night had deepened, though it wanted but an hour to dawn, and the Creek forces, crouching in the dense pine-woods before Floyd's position, waited but the first lifting of the shadows to hurl themselves upon their unsuspecting foe. Above, Floyd's men, tired after their long march, slept soundly, ignorant of the proximity of their bloodthirsty enemies, unconscious that the sentries along the outer line had all been slain—all save one, and that one a deserter from his post, a traitor to his trust.

In grim silence and sanguine of success, the fierce Creeks, their faces painted hideously for war, awaited their opportunity. A faint breeze, herald of the morn, had arisen, rustling gently among the pine-needles. Save for this and the occasional grunt of a hog, rooting here and there among the mast, only the low, half-held breathing of the red men broke the stillness.

The first faint, trembling streaks of pink wavered up into the sky, the white mists curled upwards from river and swamp, just perceptible in the gloom, and the hog wandered on, grunting and rooting, too careless or too stupid to avoid the red men all around it. More than once it collided in the darkness with the legs of some watchful warrior, to dart away with a squeal, followed by the curses of the brave, who dared not move for fear of exposing his position. And so, turning hither and thither in its search for food, the beast blundered on to where Bald Eagle and his fellow-chief, Whistling Hawk, stood beside a tree and discoursed their plans for the coming attack. Terrified, apparently, the hog stood still for a moment, and then, with a snort of disgust, swung round and waddled off in its ungainly fashion. Its back turned, however, its terror seemed to be overcome, and once again it halted, and began to grub for roots, roving leisurely from one tree to another.

The two chiefs gazed idly at the animal for a

moment, and then Whistling Hawk drew an arrow from his quiver and fitted it to his bow-string.

'Not so, my brother,' interposed Bald Eagle, laying a detaining hand upon the other's wrist. 'Shoot not, lest if you only wound the brute, it run off towards the camp of the pale-faces, and betray us by your arrow. Go and warn our young men upon the left that the time is at hand. I will tell those upon the right.'

'Waugh!' was all the reply Whistling Hawk vouchsafed, and the red chiefs moved away.

But as they disappeared, the hog sat up on its haunches, its fore-paws dangling oddly, while from underneath the coarse hide a hand stole forth. Then the mask was cautiously raised, flung back from the face it concealed, and out from the greasy skin crawled a man, who cast himself flat upon his face, and lay still.

But the Indians were behind him now and his friends in front, and though he moved slowly, yet in no long time he reached a sentry, whom he passed with a whispered word, and hurried to the General's tent.

'Duerden!' cried Floyd, springing to his feet, as the young man burst in upon him with little ceremony. 'What are you doing here? Why have you left your post?'

'Why have you left your post?' The sharp and sudden question recalled a hideous memory to Duerden's mind, and for an instant he struggled vainly to speak. Recovering himself, he briefly detailed to the General the presence of the foe in large numbers, and how he had contrived to pass through their lines.

Floyd wasted no further time in questions after this, but dashed from his tent, order after order tumbling from his lips. His dispositions made, he returned once more to Amos. 'I have news for you, Duerden,' he said; 'good news too. It seems that the Creeks made a descent upon Whispering Pines and burned it; but the settlers had got word of their approach in some way, and deserted the place. A party of them arrived about an hour ago with women and children. I have sent the latter, along with the old men, to one of our communicating posts in the rear. All who could fight I have detained here,' he finished grimly.

Amos caught back his breath sharply. Truly his punishment was beginning. 'Agnes?' he muttered.

'Well and safe,' answered Floyd cheerily. 'You can join her, or she you, after this little affair is over, for we shall win, of course. It is a'—

A shot! Another and another. Then a spattering volley and the wild, terrific Indian war-whoop as the Creeks sprang from their cover, shot down the remaining sentries, and charged up to within a few paces of the artillery of Thomas, posted to receive them.

'There they are,' said Floyd coolly. 'Amos, come with me.'

In the gloom of the pine-woods the battle raged furiously, men fighting rather by the sense of sound than of sight, conscious of the approach of a foe only when they came into grips. And in the heat of the combat Amos saw his General borne to the ground by a stalwart savage. The Redskin had lost his musket in the fray; but, as he knelt with all his weight upon Floyd's chest,

strove mightily to reach his scalping knife with one hand, while with the other he strangled his fallen adversary. With a bound Amos was upon the savage, tore him from his hold, and buried his bayonet in the broad red chest. Then he turned to assist the General to rise.

'Thank you, Amos,' said Floyd, gasping for breath. 'If you had not come just when you did you would have been left without a leader. I am your debtor for this.'

He rushed away, and as the sun rose, allowing him to survey the whole field of operations, ordered his right wing and the cavalry to charge simultaneously. The effect was immediate. Face to face with those long lines of glittering steel, the Creeks lost heart and fled through the swamps, leaving behind them a trail of dead and wounded. The battle was won, though the white men had not come off scathless.

An hour later, while the hungry soldiers were breaking their fast, Amos Duerden stalked gloomily into his commander's tent. 'I have come to make a confession, General,' he began without preface. 'I have come to ask that I may be placed under arrest.'

'Is the man gone out of his wits?' cried Floyd, considerably astonished. 'What ails you, Amos? Has the fight proved too much for your stomach? Here, drink a cup of this.' He handed some wine. 'It will bring back the colour to your cheeks.'

Amos drained the cup. 'General,' he began unsteadily, 'this is my fault. There is not a man of ours lying dead there in the pine-woods and swamps who does not owe his death to me.' In a few simple words he told the General the story of his temptation and his fall. 'Had I not left my post,' he concluded, 'the warning would have reached you in time, your dispositions would have been made, and the enemy beaten back without the loss of a man. I am a deserter, General, and I deserve a deserter's fate.'

At this Floyd looked up quickly. His face was grave, for he was a soldier first of all, and knew the gravity of the fault of which Amos accused himself. But he was also a man, and the trouble in the young fellow's face as he stood there confessing what, but for that confession, must forever have remained undiscovered, touched him, and he answered, not unkindly:

'My lad, your offence is a grave one. I could not tell you aught else. But you have striven to atone as few others would have done, to my thinking; and besides, you were, after all, in time to give the alarm and to prevent a complete surprise. Surprise or no surprise, the attack would have been made, I have little doubt, and those who are slain would have been slain. If you hold it otherwise, then your punishment is great enough. I have no wish to make it heavier. Go; I will forget that you have made this report to me. The story shall never pass my lips. I know you, and I am sure you will never give way again.'

'No; that is very true, General,' answered Amos in so strange a manner that the General glanced dubiously at him. 'You are too generous, General,' he went on, his face white and set, his lips trembling, his voice husky. 'You may forgive me, but I cannot forgive myself. Had I done my duty and trusted in God for the rest, all would have been well. As it is, I feel like a mur-

derer; I know I am a deserter. Give me over to the fate I have earned. I demand a court-martial.'

Floyd sprang to his feet. 'What!' he cried. 'You demand a court-martial? You ask that I, your General, whose life you have saved, should send you to a shameful death, which you by no means deserve. By Heaven! I will not do it. Go away and sleep, my poor fellow. When you are rested and refreshed you will see things in a different light.'

But Amos stood his ground firmly and shook his head with a melancholy smile. 'No, General,' he said; 'it must not be. I shall never see things in any other light. Death I deserve, and death I am ready to meet, and it is fitting that death should come to me at the hands of those I have betrayed. Listen to me, General,' he went on in a low, intense voice; 'if you refuse to allow me to expiate my sin, I swear to you I will go into the woods and take my own life, as I so nearly did last night. I will not live to hear men say, "There goes a coward."'

'But, madman, who will know?' cried Floyd, at his wits' end to know how to deal with the brave, but wrong-headed Amos.

'I shall know, General,' said Amos. 'I see how it is: you leave me no resource.' He bowed and turned to leave the tent.

'Stop!' roared Floyd, stepping in front of him and thrusting him back. 'Orderly!'

The orderly entered the tent. 'General?'

'Send me a corporal and a file of men.'

Presently they appeared. 'Here,' said Floyd roughly, 'arrest this man and keep him under close guard until I send for him. See to it that he does not escape.'

Amos cast a glance at the General, as much as to say, 'You might have spared me that,' and followed the corporal's guard.

An hour later he was back again, with a soldier on either side of him, while in front sat Floyd and his senior officers to try his case.

'Gentlemen,' began the General, 'this business need not detain us long. The prisoner, Amos Duerden, was on guard at the farthest outpost, when for reasons purely personal he chose to desert, leaving the approach open to the enemy. Prisoner, you are charged with deserting your post in time of war. Do you plead guilty or not guilty?'

'Guilty,' answered Amos firmly, though a hot flush of shame spread over his face as he felt rather than saw the start of surprise of the soldiers at his side. The officers at the table said no word. Most of them knew that Amos had brought news of the intended attack, some of them that he had saved Floyd's life. But they were all silent. Not one of them asked a question, or urged anything in extenuation of the prisoner's crime.

'Guilty!' echoed Floyd. 'You hear, gentlemen, he pleads guilty. Prisoner, have you anything to say in your own behalf?'

'Nothing,' answered Amos, and stood in gloomy abstraction while Floyd and his officers conferred together in low tones.

At last the conversation ceased and the General looked across at Amos. 'Prisoner,' he said, 'you have been charged with desertion of your post in time of war. A graver charge cannot be brought

against a soldier. That you voluntarily surrendered yourself is to your credit; but it can avail you nothing, for the braver and the better disciplined the soldier, the more serious such a dereliction of duty. There remains nothing for me but to pronounce the sentence of the court, since you have pleaded guilty. Once more, have you anything to say?'

And once more Amos answered, 'Nothing.'

'Then,' said Floyd, in a low, grave voice, 'the sentence of the court is that you be taken back to the guard-tent and in one hour from now you be removed thence to a place to be determined upon and there shot. The court is dissolved.'

Not a word more was said. The guard removed the prisoner, who, amid the wondering glances of his comrades, walked with firm step to the guard-tent, where the flap was lowered and he was left to his own meditations. The hour passed all too quickly; but ere it struck there was a sound of jingling spur and scabbard, and Floyd strode into the prisoner's presence.

Amos stood up and saluted.

'Duerden,' began the General, 'I think you have behaved like a madman. But you left me no option. I do not wish to make your load of trouble heavier than it is already, but I wish to tell you that already your story is known throughout the camp, and not one of your comrades has a word to say in your blame. You have forced me to condemn you; you are acquitted by them.'

Still Amos was silent, and Floyd went on, not without emotion, 'You saved my life, Amos, and I would fain be of service to you now. Is there nothing you will allow me to do?'

'General,' was the answer, 'let me face my comrades' fire with my eyes unbound, and do you see to it that Agnes knows that I atoned for my fault and died as a brave man should die.'

'I will,' promised Floyd. His voice was gruff and unsteady, and his keen eyes were moist as he left the tent.

Ten minutes later Amos Duerden stood in front of the firing-party told off to do him to death. His regiment, drawn up, looked on, and all the superior officers were present.

Amos stood with the handkerchief in his hand which he was to drop as a signal for the volley which was to cut his thread of life so suddenly. He glanced at his comrades, and some of the rough fellows were weeping. He looked at the sky, the woods, the river for the last time, and drew in a long breath of the sweet, fresh, morning air. 'For the last time,' he thought dully. 'For the last time,' and braced himself for the coming shock.

Suddenly, far away, his eye caught sight of a party of horsemen advancing at a gallop. There was a flutter of skirts somewhere in the midst of them, and Amos, forgetting to give the signal, fixed his eyes upon the cavalcade and held them there, fascinated.

Nearer and nearer they came, until at last he could distinguish the familiar figures of men he knew. But among them, horrible to dream of, was his love, his Agnes, coming to see him die. A strange scream, more like that of an animal in pain than any human sound, burst from him. If he lost his nerve now he would be disgraced for ever. And it was going. He had not looked for

trial such as this. It was going—going fast. He raised his hand above his head and dashed the handkerchief to the ground.

'Fire!'

From the dark mouths of the levelled muskets tongues of flame streamed viciously towards him. The rolling echoes of the volley died away, and Amos Duerden stood erect and unharmed.

Dazed and bewildered, he stared in front of him, hearing, as a man in a dream, the sound of those galloping hoofs. Then, mechanically he raised his hand once more, and went through the action of dashing the handkerchief to the ground. But Floyd, who had been watching him keenly, left his place and hastened to him.

'Amos Duerden,' he said in a voice so loud that every man assembled there could hear each word that fell from his lips, 'Amos Duerden, give me your hand.' He stood, holding the hand of the condemned man and went on. 'You are a brave man and no coward, Amos Duerden. A coward would have hidden his fault, knowing that it could never be discovered. Only a brave man—I had well-nigh said a hero—could have come forward, as you did, to his own condemnation. Amos Duerden, there is not a man among your comrades who does not honour you to-day.' A deafening cheer rent the air. 'You forced me to this course to defend you from yourself. You have faced the death you longed for, faced it as a brave man should. Its bitterness is past for you. Your sin is atoned for, and you are free. By my order the muskets were charged with powder alone.'

At that, Amos Duerden, brave, strong man as he was, rocked from side to side like a wind-shaken sapling, reeled and fell, even as a dead man, at his General's feet.

When he came to himself, the noise of his comrades' cheering was still in his ears; but his head was in Agnes's lap, and she was bending over him with tears of joy streaming down her face.

NEW WATERWORKS FOR LONDON: STAINES RESERVOIRS.

BY A CIVIL ENGINEER.

In 1893 a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the water-supply of London. The result of their inquiry was to show that, by constructing storage reservoirs in the valleys of the Thames and Lea, enough water might be impounded when these rivers were high to supply the Metropolis for the next twenty years, even if the growth of the population were maintained at its present rate. They also found that the quality of the water was much better than had been generally supposed, and, instead of becoming worse, tended to continually improve, owing to the operations of the Conservancy Board in compelling the towns, villages, and detached houses situated on the river-banks and on those of their tributaries to purify their sewage, which formerly flowed in its raw state directly into the rivers. One curious fact was brought out, namely, that the water of the Thames was actually purer at Hampton, where the water companies have their intakes, than in the upper reaches of the river, showing the power of flowing water to purify itself by oxidation, the action of friendly

microbes in consuming those prejudicial to health, and otherwise.

At present the different water companies take about 120 million gallons a day—more than half the entire supply of London—from the River Thames, and have power to take a maximum quantity of 130 millions. Acting on the recommendations of the Royal Commission, three of the water companies—the New River, the Grand Junction, and the West Middlesex—combined, forming what is known as the Joint Committee, and obtained an act of parliament in the session of 1896 empowering them to construct works called the Staines Reservoirs, a scheme originally suggested by Mr Walter Hunter, M. Inst. C.E., who, with Mr R. E. Middleton, M. Inst. C.E., is joint engineer for the works which it is now proposed to describe.

The act gives the Joint Committee power to take water from the river above the Bell Weir, which is situated about a mile higher up than the town of Staines, up to a maximum of 100 million gallons a day, as long as 265 millions are passing over the Bell Weir. They may also admit water from the Wyrardisbury and Colne Brook, which join the Thames at Staines, but the total must never exceed the quantity stated above, and the only advantage derived from doing so consists in their waters being considerably less turbid than that of the Thames in times of flood.

The amount of water to be distributed to the three companies must not exceed 35 million gallons a day, without special permission from the Local Government Board, when it may be raised to 45 millions, and is to be equally divided among them. The works about to be constructed comprise an intake, 8½ miles of aqueduct, three reservoirs, a pumping station, and about four miles of piping.

The intake is situated, as before mentioned, on the bank of the Thames just above the Bell Weir, where the ordinary summer level is 48·27 feet above Ordnance datum. It consists of an outer basin containing a row of copper wire-gauze screens, arranged in a segment of a circle, sliding in cast-iron guides, which support a small tramway, by means of which the screens can be removed for cleansing. The water is admitted through four sluice openings controlled by sluices, over which is a house to contain hydraulic gear to work the sluices, &c. There are also to be two comfortable cottages for workmen, with gardens raised above flood level.

The water from the sluices flows into an inner basin at the commencement of the aqueduct, which is open for a short distance, when it enters a double line of tunnel, extending to the Colne Brook, below which it will be carried in a double inverted steel siphon, discharging into an open aqueduct 15 feet wide and 6 feet 4 inches deep when flowing full, and capable of discharging 150 million gallons a day, regard having been had to the possibility of future extensions. The aqueduct is continued at these dimensions to the pumping station, a distance of about two miles from the intake, except where it passes below the Great Western and London and South-Western Railways, where it is in double tunnels. There are also steel inverted siphons below the Wyrardisbury and Colne Brook. From the pumping station to the Hampton distributing

reservoir the width is reduced to 11 feet at the water level, the depth remaining the same, and the discharging capacity to 90 million gallons a day. It is open throughout this section, save where it passes beneath the London and South-Western Railway and two public roads in inverted siphons of brick and concrete work. The London and South-Western Railway again crosses it near Hampton by means of a steel girder bridge. There are also a number of road and accommodation bridges. The aqueduct will be lined with cement concrete throughout, and have a gradient of about 10 inches in the mile.

The reservoirs for storage purposes will be two in number, covering an area of about a square mile, 38 and 29 feet deep respectively at their deepest points, and capable of storing 3000 million gallons, or about eighty-five days' supply. They will be formed by enclosing the area by means of an embankment, including the cross bank between the two reservoirs, 4½ miles long, the materials for which are to be obtained from excavations in the interior of the reservoirs.

Each reservoir is provided with an upstand tower through which the supply is admitted from the pumping mains, and water can be drawn off to feed the aqueduct through an upstand pipe, which is fitted with valves at different levels, so that the upper and purer stratum of water can always be used. Both the inlet and outlet pipes pass through tunnels, to be constructed in the underlying bed of London clay, converging to a sluice house on the outer side of the embankment, where all the inlet and outlet arrangements can be regulated, and the water pumped into or drawn off from either reservoir at pleasure. The water is discharged through two lines of 48-inch pipes into a circular basin at the head of a branch aqueduct about a mile long, connected with the main aqueduct at the Billet Bridge.

As before stated, the pumping station is situated on the side of the aqueduct, about two miles from the intake, and will contain five condensing engines capable of delivering 16½ million gallons a day against a head of 43 feet, so that four working together (one being always kept in reserve) will be able to supply 66 million gallons a day.

The boiler-house adjoins the engine-house, and will contain six tubulous boilers capable of supplying steam at a pressure of 150 lb. per square inch. There is also a separate house for a workshop, where all ordinary repairs will be done, and the dynamo which will supply electric light and power to drive machine tools, &c.

The pumping station will be connected with the London and South-Western Railway by a siding, by means of which all coal and other stores will be brought direct to the works. The pumping mains consist of a double line of steel pipes six feet four inches in diameter, nearly a mile long. The water will be supplied to the different companies at Hampton by means of circular telescopic gauges, kept at a fixed depth below the surface of the water by copper floats, through lines of 48-inch pipes. The New River Company have just obtained parliamentary powers to construct extensive filter and other works near Hampton to enable them to utilise their proportion of the new supply and convey it to the districts in the north of London which they supply.

The method proposed to be adopted in working

the Staines Reservoirs scheme is, when there is just sufficient water in the Thames to supply the fixed quantity to be taken by the companies, it will be allowed to flow direct to Hampton; when the flow is in excess of this, the engines will be started and the reservoirs filled up. It is estimated that thirty full days pumping per annum will, on the average, be required for this purpose. When the water which can be drawn direct from the river falls below the fixed quantity required, it will be supplemented by drawing from the reservoirs; this will also require to be done when the Thames is in flood, and consequently not in such a condition that it can be used.

The contract for all the works, except the engines and steel pipes, has been let to the well-known firm of John Aird & Son, and the whole cost, exclusive of land, is estimated at about £800,000. They are expected to be completed in about five years.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

ONE of the most important aids to plant life is nitric acid, which is generated in the soil from the various nitrogenous manures which find their way to it naturally, or are applied artificially to the land. It has, however, been found of late years that certain leguminous crops—peas, beans, &c.—possess an excess of nitrogen which can only be accounted for on the supposition that these particular plants have the power of assimilating nitrogen from the atmosphere. For eighty or ninety years past the possibility of plants being able to get their nitrogen in this way has been warmly discussed by agricultural chemists, and the general conclusion was a negative one, until continuous experiments upon crops have shown that the matter requires reconsideration. It has now been established that the leguminous plants do assimilate nitrogen in this way, and that the phenomenon is dependent upon certain bacteria which form peculiar swellings or nodules round the roots of the plants. The matter has recently gathered renewed interest from the circumstance that these useful organisms have been successfully cultivated artificially, and have been placed on the markets for the use of farmers by the well-known chemical firm of Meister, Lucius, & Brünig. Various varieties are cultivated for the treatment of different crops, such as pea, field pea, vetches, horsebeans, &c., and have been tried in our own country with encouraging success. The action of these bacteria forms a remarkable instance of the way in which vegetable life, and, indirectly, animal life is dependent upon microscopic organisms, which are by many most erroneously supposed to be associated only with disease and death.

In connection with pea cultivation we may note here that Messrs J. Carter & Co., the well-known seedsmen, have lately given a very valuable hint to market-gardeners which they should not be slow to take advantage of. It seems that these agriculturists are too apt to run in the same rut year after year—confining their attention to only about half-a-dozen varieties of pea, whereas if they were more liberal in their selection of seeds, they would be able to reap a much more extended harvest. Messrs Carter quote the re-

sults of trials which they have made with regard to the podding periods of different peas, all sown on 29th March. These matured one after the other from 10th June, when the first lot were ready to pick, to 20th July, and they maintain that a selection from the list quoted should under fair conditions give us green peas until the end of September.

From an investigation lately made by the president of Clark University (America), it would seem that of all the numerous objects of fear to which human beings are liable thunderstorms take the lead, although in certain localities where cyclones are common the fear of the latter form of atmospheric disturbance predominates. There is no doubt that the effect of a severe thunderstorm, especially when it occurs at night, is awe-inspiring even to the most callous, coupled as it is with the knowledge of the death-dealing power of the lightning. But when we appeal to statistics we find that this terrible dread of the consequences of a thunderstorm is not justified by facts. If all the cases of accidental death recorded during a year in Britain be enumerated, it will be found that a very small percentage must be credited to lightning stroke. And city dwellers may comfort themselves with the reflection that their risk of being struck is five times less than that of those who reside in country districts. The cause of this is supposed to be due to the metal gutters and pipes attached to all town houses, which act as lightning conductors and convey the current to earth.

Professor T. R. Fraser, who has made a study of serpent's venom, and has suggested means for rendering it inert by 'Antivenine,' has recently called attention to the circumstance that serpent's venom when introduced into the stomach of an animal will produce no injurious effect although the amount of poison swallowed would be sufficient if introduced beneath the skin to kill one thousand animals of the same species and weight. He attributes this immunity from harm to the action of the bile. He has further ascertained that the bile of serpents when mixed with venom will prevent it from producing death, even when it is present in very small quantity. The bile of some other animals also possesses this antidotal quality, but not to the same extent as the bile of snakes.

In the *American Naturalist* some interesting experiments by Mr F. C. Baker are described—the object of them being to ascertain the effect of music upon caged animals. The experiments, similar to those conducted in the Regent's Park Zoological Gardens a year or two ago, were conducted in the Zoological Gardens, Lincoln Park, and the instrument chosen to soothe the savage breasts of the animals was a violin. Mr Baker stood in front of each cage in turn, and first played simple airs such as 'Home, sweet Home,' 'The Last Rose of Summer,' &c., and then changed to a more sprightly theme such as a jig. The animals first operated upon were the puma and the jaguar, and we bracket these together, for the strains had precisely the same effect upon each. They liked the ballads, and showed their appreciation by lying down with their heads between their paws and listening with close attention. But the dance music made them quickly get up and show every sign of irritation. The

leopards, after giving a curious glance at the performer, made no further sign, and were apparently indifferent as to whether the music went on or ceased. The lions were steadfast listeners to the ballads; but pranced about in a lively manner when the jig commenced; whether actuated by a desire to dance or by feelings of displeasure does not seem to have been ascertained. The Bengal tiger snarled viciously at the violinist, but his consort appeared to like the music. But the most patient and pleased listeners were the coyotes, or prairie wolves, who ran out of their holes at the sound of the music, and listened with rapt attention until it ceased, when they pawed at the player as if begging him to favour them once more. Like the other animals, the coyotes preferred simple melodies to jigs.

London has at last been equipped with some horseless cabs, which have been designed to supersede the disgracefully shabby and inconvenient vehicles which have hitherto plied for hire in the metropolitan streets. The new cabs are driven by electricity, are lighted by electricity inside and out; they have rubber tyres, spring cushions, and possess every device to make their occupants comfortable. They carry a set of battery cells which, once charged, will furnish energy enough for a run of fifty miles. When these cells are exhausted the cab is run into the charging-station, and in five minutes emerges again with a fresh set of cells ready for another fifty miles' journey. The cost of the electric current amounts to only one penny per three miles' run, the current being drawn from the public mains in the daylight hours, when the demand upon it is at a minimum. The cabs are neat in appearance. The driver sits in front, and has at his right hand a lever which sets the vehicle in motion at a speed of from one to nine miles an hour. A pedal in reach of his foot will immediately switch off the current and apply the brake, the steering being accomplished by a wheel on his left. In a crowded thoroughfare, where stoppages are frequent, it is possible to set the lever at 'slow ahead,' and then by putting the foot on and off the pedal, to stop or propel the vehicle as may be needed.

An invention which may certainly claim the virtue of novelty has been introduced by one Rudolph Altschul. It aims at bathing a ship's hull in a friction-destroying oleaginous mixture, an application which is said to increase its speed twenty-five per cent., to put a stop to all corrosion, to prevent the attachment of barnacles, and in rough weather to present the best means of quelling an angry sea. But it would seem that the apparatus is rather complicated, and of such a nature that its application to a vessel must be attended by considerable expense. Attached to a series of flanges below the water-line are sheets of woven wire netting, covered with an absorbent composition, upon which the oily mixture is sprayed from the back by means of perforated tubes. This is not washed away by the water, but actually hardens, forming a greasy coating to the vessel. Applied to torpedoes, and submarine projectiles of all kinds, this treatment is said to confer upon them a much increased velocity.

A recent article in the *Daily Telegraph* was devoted to the terrible scarcity of water in the Transvaal, and described Africa generally as the 'classic land of drought.' From May until

September or October no rain falls in the neighbourhood of Johannesburg, and the morning ablution costs at least a shilling for two bottles of soda water. And yet, with all this scarcity, the annual rainfall in the Transvaal is one-sixth more than it is in the metropolitan area of England. When the rain does come it comes as a veritable deluge, and in a single day one-seventh of the annual supply may fall. You may perchance cross the dry gravelly bed of a stream to-day, and to-morrow a foaming torrent, thirty feet deep, will be rushing down the same ravine. At present these torrential waters are mostly lost; there are no means of conserving them; but the country is full of ravines and valleys which, by the erection of dams, could be converted into storage lakes. It would be a matter of economy in more than one sense to prosecute such works, for at present the damage wrought by the floods is very great. It is also very probable that the many diseases to which all kinds of stock are subject in this country may be traced to the foul and stagnant pools from which the animals are compelled to drink.

Some remarkable details with regard to the adulteration of silk recently came before the Chamber of Commerce, Macclesfield, and the Society of Chemical Industry at Manchester. It was found that by immersing silk in vegetable extracts containing tannic acid, a chemical combination between the silk and the acid was induced which added nearly twenty-five per cent. to the weight of the material. But some of the Continental manufacturers go far beyond this in their greed of gain—or, as they would put it, perhaps, in the necessity of coping with commercial competition. In one case a hundred pounds weight of silk was sent to the dyer with a request that its weight was to be increased tenfold; so that when the operation was complete the fabric contained less than ten per cent. of silk, the rest being mineral matter. There is one advantage in a lady being costumed in such a dress—she is safe from the risk of being burnt to death while she wears it, for it is incombustible. Raised to a high temperature, it will smoulder away and leave a perfect mineral skeleton with a silky lustre. On the other hand, certain black silks which have been weighted up to only 300 or 400 per cent. have been known to break into flame spontaneously.

The president of the Thames Angling Preservation Society, Alderman Nuthall, J.P., is partly responsible for the story of a remarkable barbel which is said to have been caught no fewer than ten different times, and on each occasion returned to the water. The fish, which weighs a trifle over three pounds, is remarkable for a deformity of the tail, possibly caused by collision with a lock-sluice. In 1896 it was caught three times by the alderman himself, and during the present year it has once more been attracted to the same rod. It always makes its way to the same spot, although it may be replaced in a different part of the river every time it is captured. On a certain Saturday last August it was again caught, returned to the river, and hooked again the following Monday, when it gained first prize in a competition. It has again been returned to the river, and is doubtless on the lookout for the next tempting bait which may be offered.

The recent find of gold in Canada comes as no

surprise to geologists, for ten years ago the officers of the Geological Survey of Canada reported that gold would be found there in considerable quantities. Gold-mining in the Yukon district began as early as 1880, but the miners confined their attention to the river-beds rather than to the extensive quartz veins. This is by no means the first time that scientific men have pointed out the places where men should seek gold, and have been unheeded. Jamieson, a mineralogist, who wrote a book in 1816, said: 'On the coast of California there is a place of fourteen leagues in extent covered with an alluvial deposit in which lumps of gold are dispersed.' The rush to the Californian goldfields did not come until more than thirty years after these words were printed. Again in 1846 Sir Roderick Murchison urged the unemployed Cornish miners to take their picks to New South Wales in order to seek gold in what he termed 'the Australian Cordilleras.' His words were unheeded, but five years later every one was hurrying to the goldfields there.

A well-known American astronomer, in the course of a recent address, alluded to the strange fact that the earth, and solar system generally, is constantly moving towards that point of the heavens in which the bright star Vega is situated. 'Through every year,' said he, 'every hour, every minute of human history, from the first appearance of man upon the earth, the sun and the whole solar system with it, have been speeding towards that star, at a rate probably between five and nine miles a second. We are at this moment thousands of miles nearer to Vega than we were a few minutes' ago. When shall we get there? Perhaps in less than a million years, perhaps in half a million years. To attain the stars was the seemingly vain wish of the philosopher; but the whole human race is, in a certain sense, realising this wish as rapidly as a speed of six or eight miles a second can bring it about.' These words are worthy of quotation, for they form an admirable attempt to illustrate that which is impossible for the ordinary mind to conceive—the stupendous scale upon which the universe is constructed.

The occurrence of a waterspout on the British coasts is sufficiently rare to justify a record, particularly when by a happy accident the phenomenon has come under the personal notice of a scientific man. Sir W. H. Flower describes a waterspout which he witnessed at Cromer, Norfolk, in September last. It consisted, he tells us, of two distinct parts. A long conical projection, which proceeded downwards from the edge of a dense black cloud, and another cloud with a narrow stem which rose from the sea, but the two never appeared to mingle. The projection from above terminated below in a fine point, which 'writhed and twisted about like an elephant's trunk.' The curious appearance lasted for about half-an-hour, gradually drifting out to sea until finally lost to sight.

The recent purchase by Mr Bernard Quaritch of the Ashburnham copy of the Gutenberg-Fust, or Mazarin Bible, for £4000 has led the *Publishers' Weekly*, an American trade organ, to draw up a list of the other copies in existence. The Earl of Ashburnham had paid £3400 for this copy at the Perkins sale in 1873. It has two leaves in facsimile, and was stolen in 1763 from the Mentz University and sold to a London bookseller, by

whom it was again sold to Perkins the brewer for £504. It is rumoured that Robert Hoe of New York is now the possessor. Although its claim to be the first book printed from movable types has been disputed in favour of the thirty-six-line or Bamberg Bible, no part of the work in this forty-two-line Bible, as Mr T. L. de Vinne has said, 'was done hastily or unadvisedly.' Gutenberg may not have received practical education as a book-maker, but he had the rare good sense to accept instruction from those who had. The book was obviously planned by an adept in all the book-making skill of his time.' The book consists of 1282 printed pages, two columns to the page, and forty-two lines to the column. The general effect of the typography is that of excessive blackness, although, owing to the closeness of the printing, it is not very readable. It is not thought probable that Gutenberg printed an edition of even three hundred copies, and the enterprise was not commercially successful. This Bible has been called Mazarin from the fact of a copy having been discovered and described in the library of Cardinal Mazarin. Upwards of thirty copies of this Bible are known to be in existence, of which number eight are printed on vellum. The British Museum has a vellum copy, and the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, a copy on paper. The Syson Park copy (Sir John Thorold's) was sold in 1884 to Quaritch for £3900. The Duke of Sussex bought his copy for 160 guineas, and, after passing through several hands, it was bought by Quaritch in 1888 for £2650. Another copy, bought at the sale of Sir M. M. Sykes in 1824, for £199 by Perkins, brought £2690 at the sale of the latter. The Hopetoun copy brought £2000 in 1888. This is certainly a case of a book being worth more than its weight in gold.

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A NIGHT IN AUSTIN FRIARS.

BY T. S. E. HAKE.

CHAPTER I.—THE GARRET MYSTERY.

THE gray fog that had sailed up the Thames at sunrise, favoured by wind and tide, had come to anchor over London, and evidently meant to stay. It had gradually transformed itself into a dense mass. During that wintry day—in the City at least—time had got out of joint. The great thoroughfares had become hopelessly congested with heavy traffic. The mails from the country and abroad were considerably delayed. Travellers who had journeyed a thousand miles by land and sea—who had calculated to reach their destination at a fixed date—began to peer out of carriage windows in consternation and blank despair. To many it was a serious matter; to some it was even a matter of life and death.

The royal mail from Dover to London was hours overdue. Among the first-class passengers by this train was a young traveller in a fur coat, who sat in a corner of his carriage impatiently consulting his watch. There was a small black valise on the seat at his side, and it seemed obvious that this valise—or, more strictly speaking, its hidden contents—occupied his almost undivided thoughts. His look seldom rested a moment elsewhere. If the valise had been possessed of the power or will to escape him, he could not have kept upon it a keener guard; and when the train at last reached London Bridge, and the traveller stepped into a cab, he grasped the handle of his valise with nervous tension, while in answer to the cabman's stereotyped inquiry, 'Where to, sir?' he called out:

'Austin Friars.'

At the arched entrance to Austin Friars he dismissed his cab. A few paces and he found himself in an open square. There were mansions on all sides with a distinct look about them of bygone days.

'Ah! that should be the house,' he muttered while approaching a big corner mansion. 'Bad luck! it's past office hours. But mightn't I find Mr Grinold still at his desk?'

The house had stone steps, with iron railings, that led up on either side to a pair of massive oak doors. These doors shared in common the shelter of a heavy, shell-shaped canopy that frowned overhead. Under this canopy there was a gas-lamp; it brightened a limited circle of space, giving a look of intensity to the fog beyond. The traveller mounted these steps, and stopped under the lamp. He took a card from his pocket-book. Upon the card was written, 'Mr Gilbert Ringham, British and Cairo Bank.' He now glanced with some perplexity at the two entrances, for there was a broad panel between them, upon which was inscribed 13A. It was the address to which he had been directed, without a doubt—13A Austin Friars. But which of the two houses claimed this number? Gilbert Ringham bent down to examine more closely the twin doors.

Upon the left-hand one he discovered nothing, but upon the right-hand door he made out 'Anthony Grinold' in faded letters. He was about to raise the knocker, when he chanced to notice that the door stood slightly ajar. 'Good luck!' said he. The office was not yet closed, and pushing open the door, which instantly yielded to his touch, he stepped into the hall. It was broad and lofty, and the carved-oak paneling was black with age. There were a number of doors, as he could just perceive in the dim light; but they were all locked. Ringham mounted to the first floor; he met with the same experience. Mr Grinold's counting-house was closed for the day. He had arrived too late.

Gilbert Ringham stood at the staircase window,

that looked out upon the square, to consider what would be the best course to pursue in order to find Mr Grinold with the least possible delay. He had come in all haste from Cairo upon an errand that demanded shrewdness and tact. He took the letter of recommendation from his pocket. It was addressed to 'Mr Anthony Grinold, 13a Austin Friars;' and Ringham had been instructed to deliver it to that gentleman. He was to hold no communication whatever on the subject of his errand with any other person or persons. That had been impressed upon him with due emphasis. Would it be feasible to see Mr Grinold to-night? He put his valise upon the deep window-sill and sat down. Where did Mr Grinold live? He had not the remotest conception. He would go forth and take every means in his power to ascertain. He must find him to-night.

Seizing the valise and rising hastily, Ringham was about to descend the stairs, when he heard a quick, light footfall upon the stone steps outside, immediately beneath the window at which he was standing. Next moment the front-door was pulled to with a loud bang, and a key grated in the lock. A full sense of the mishap was instantly realised. He sprang to the window and tried to force it open; but the framework was old, the bolt rusty and immovable. He peered eagerly out into the fog and listened for the footfall on the steps. But no one came in sight, no sound reached his ear.

The canopy that hung over the twin doors was some feet below this staircase window. Could the person who had locked him in be still standing under it? Ringham had raised his hand to tap at the window-pane—to break it if need be—when a girl in a dark cloak and fur-trimmed hat stepped from under the great shell. For an instant she raised her face so that the light fell fully upon it, as from a shaded lamp, and then she turned nimbly on her heels and was gone.

During that moment of chance Ringham lost his head. Instead of tapping at the window to attract the girl's attention—much less breaking the pane—he had stared out in pure wonder and amaze. What a vision! Did the eyes of man ever before rest upon anything more beautiful, anywhere—least of all in a foggy old City square? It must have been mere fancy—an hallucination—or possibly a spirit of the mist that had haunted this spot in those lonely, marshland days of centuries gone by, before even the Augustine friars came to dwell there.

Meanwhile the staircase had become quite dark. Not only had the fog closed in about Austin Friars; it was night. Gilbert Ringham struck a match, and went down into the hall to make sure that he was actually locked in. All doubt was quickly set at rest; no exit by the front-door was possible. He reascended the stairs with the thought to explore the upper floors. The rooms consisted of attics, as he soon ascertained; and all the doors of these attics were locked. But in one of the doors he found a key. He hastened to turn this key, though not without a certain sense of trepidation after so many disappointments. The door opened noiselessly, and he went into the room.

Striking another match—he had already nearly exhausted his supply—Ringham made out this

room to be a moderate-sized garret. It was furnished as a sort of private office or study. A thick, though somewhat threadbare, Turkey rug covered the centre of the floor. A heavy old-fashioned bureau stood against the wall, opposite the garret window. On either side of a diminutive fireplace there was a cupboard, and Ringham expended a match on each of these in order to examine them minutely. The locks were turned in both of them, the keys gone, and the key-holes blocked with dust and cobwebs. A capacious arm-chair was drawn up near the empty hearth. That chair should be his resting-place for the night. He bolted the door. Then, having contrived to unlock his valise in the darkness, he spread it open upon the rug. And now he lighted the last match. The dim flame lit up for a moment the contents of his valise. The space on one side was filled up with a bundle of foreign bonds, while the other side held a few necessary articles of clothing, a sandwich-box, and a flask of brandy.

The match-light struggled feebly and went out. Ringham groped his way to the arm-chair, having secured the sandwich-box and brandy, and sat down resignedly to consume his frugal supper.

At first he fumed considerably over the situation; but presently, becoming restful and refreshed, he began to take a more philosophical view of things. When entrusted with this parcel of foreign bonds—valued at thirty thousand pounds—he had been ordered to let out no hint that he held them, except to Mr Grinold in person. Had he not acted with intuitive wisdom and foresight after all? By shouting down to the girl under the lamp to come back and release him, he would have incurred a needless risk. Had she taken alarm and roused the neighbourhood, the truth about his confidential business with Anthony Grinold might have leaked out. With this consoling reflection Gilbert Ringham buttoned his fur coat tightly about him, and presently dropped off into a sound sleep.

The red dawn that looked in at the garret window next morning forced Ringham by slow degrees to open his eyes. For one hazy moment, while blinking at the light, he had no conception of his whereabouts; and then it all came back to him: the closing of the door—the lovely vision under the lamp in the old square—the responsible errand upon which he had come to the house of Grinold of Austin Friars. He rose in haste, glancing round the garret, curious to inspect it more closely by daylight. Of a sudden his eyes rested upon the valise lying agape upon the floor, as he had left it when his last match went out. A ray of sunlight was pointing directly down upon it. The space on one side was empty. The foreign bonds had disappeared.

Ringham's consternation increased to a sense of horror when he came to examine the garret door. The bolt was undrawn; it rested in the socket, precisely as he had adjusted it before unlocking his valise. How could the robbery have been achieved? No possible clue to the mystery presented itself to his distracted mind. He made a thorough inspection of the room, without any reassuring result. The walls were whitewashed and bare, and the flooring was too smooth and securely nailed down to waken suspicion of trap-doors. The window was festooned with cob-

webs, and the dust and cobwebs about the locks of the cupboard doors showed no sign of having been disturbed.

Ringham gave up the search in pure bewilderment. He went out upon the stairs. There was some one moving about on one of the floors below, for he could hear the thumping and skirmishing of a broom. It was an opportune moment in which to make an exit. While at the head of the staircase, listening, the bells of the neighbouring church clocks caught his ear; and in the midst of these minor sounds that echoed clearly over the still noiseless City, there boomed forth the great bell of St Paul's.

'Seven!'

Gilbert Ringham stepped softly downstairs. The front-door stood open, and he went out. There was no one in the square—only a lean, black cat that wriggled between some area railings at sight of him and vanished.

In the bedroom of a commercial hotel hard by Ringham resolved upon his plan of action. He had been robbed mysteriously—robbed of foreign government securities amounting to thirty thousand pounds—in the back garret of a counting-house in Austin Friars. His first thought had been to telegraph this fact to Cairo by means of a secret code; but a moment's reflection showed him that his first step should be to find Mr Grinold and submit to him the bare truth. The safest course would be to seek his aid and protection. Could he possibly refuse? Anthony Grinold was the person most interested, and his advice would assuredly prove the most sound. It must rest with him to decide what action should be taken in the matter, what means employed to unravel the mystery.

The City clocks had not yet struck nine when Ringham again presented himself at Grinold's counting-house in Austin Friars. The office on the ground-floor, with desks and high stools enough for a score of clerks, had a deserted appearance. The door stood open, but there was no one there. Ringham began to dread that there might be some delay—that he might be compelled to wait another hour—when he caught sight of a little man with a bald head and grayish beard pacing about in an inner room.

'Mr Grinold?' he ventured to ask.

He approached the open door while speaking, and he now perceived that the man was agitated. His fat, round face expressed solicitude. Ringham repeated his inquiry in a louder tone.

The man started out of his abstraction and looked round. 'No; my name is not Grinold,' said he. 'I'm Warrener—John Warrener—Mr Grinold's manager. What is it?'

Ringham handed him his card. 'I've come from Cairo,' he said, watching the manager's face narrowly, 'with a letter of introduction to Mr Grinold. It's about a matter of business.'

'A matter of business!' with his look bent upon the card. 'May I see the letter?'

The letter in question was produced. Warrener turned it over in his hand. The words 'Private and confidential' were inscribed upon the left-hand upper corner, and it bore an official seal.

'Sit down. I must consult with Shuttleworth about this letter,' said he. 'Shuttleworth will be here directly, I expect. Sit down.'

Shuttleworth? The name was unknown to

Ringham. Surely nothing could have happened to rouse the manager's suspicions? His nervous, distressful manner could not, surely, be associated with the stolen bonds. Ringham, standing with his hand upon a chair, hastened to answer: 'I cannot wait. Where does Mr Grinold live? The matter upon which I have come to London is most urgent. I must see him at once.'

Ringham's words roused a drowsy interest not previously manifest. 'Urgent, is it? Well, it would be waste of time to inquire into the nature of your business—only waste of time; for I shouldn't like to meddle with Mr Grinold's private affairs without consulting Shuttleworth. He's Mr Grinold's lawyer.'

It was now quite obvious to Ringham that John Warrener was in total darkness with regard to the errand upon which he had come. He would otherwise have shown eagerness to put him in direct communication with Mr Grinold. He began to grow impatient.

'The lawyer can be of no service to me, Mr Warrener! Perhaps,' he suggested—'perhaps I should find Mr Grinold at home? Is his house any distance from here?'

'No, not any distance.'

'Will you give me his address, and?'

'It would be useless,' said Warrener; 'Mr Grinold is dead.'

The manager's confused manner—his repeated reference to Shuttleworth—all was now explained. Ringham turned this new and unexpected situation rapidly over in his mind. Why should he part with the letter of introduction? Mr Grinold was dead. The letter was lying on the table unopened, and he recovered it without any show of hesitation, while saying: 'I've put up at the "Two Swans." If you, or Mr Grinold's lawyer, have any communication to make, you will find me there.' And he stepped towards the door.

'Stop!' said Warrener. 'I am forgetting myself; but you will excuse me under the circumstances. If Mr Grinold had lived—he died quite suddenly this morning—you would have been his guest. Won't you be mine? Let me give you a line to my daughter. Any friend of Mr Grinold's, any one coming from abroad with a letter to him, would receive a welcome from her. I'll try to get home to an early dinner,' added Mr Grinold's manager, his face getting rounder at the prospect; 'and perhaps I may prevail upon Shuttleworth to join us—perhaps. He's a busy man.'

While saying this he sat down to pen a line, which he concluded by addressing to 'Miss Helen Warrener, Charterhouse Square.'

'One moment,' he went on as he rose and placed his hand on Ringham's arm. 'My daughter knows nothing about Mr Grinold's death. May I ask you, as a favour, to break the news to her? She has a very great regard for the old gentleman—you won't be too abrupt, will you?'

It was impossible to refuse. Warrener had placed the note in his hand; though, in truth, Ringham was in no mood to condole with the manager's daughter. It had devolved upon him to make strenuous efforts, devote every moment of the day to the matter of the stolen bonds. He held an excellent position in the bank at Cairo; but that would be forfeited—ruin would in all likelihood stare him in the face—if this mystery

remained many hours unexplained. On the way to Charterhouse Square, he stopped at the 'Two Swans' and devised a telegram to Cairo. Done into plain English it ran as follows: 'Robbed of bonds—Grinold dead.'

When Gilbert Ringham's cab presently landed him at the door of a small, red-brick house, in the corner of a row of red-brick houses, facing the gray weather-beaten walls of a picturesque old monastery, he looked about him with curiosity at the ancient appearance of the place. In the centre of the square there was a garden with a broad walk under an avenue of limes. The solitary figure of a tall girl was moving beneath the trees, where the autumn leaves were fluttering down around her in russet-tinted showers. She wore a dark cloak and a fur-trimmed hat, and as she turned to retrace her steps the full face was directed towards him. He recognised her at once. It was the girl he had seen under the lamp—the girl who had locked the door in Austin Friars.

Why not speak to her? She had been the indirect cause of his disastrous loss. Might she not prove to be a tangible link in the chain of evidence wanted to unearth the affair? He was about to put his impulse into force, to cross over into the garden, when the house door opened behind him.

'Is Miss Warrener at home?'

He was shown into a dingy, old-fashioned drawing-room upstairs. The windows gave upon the square. No sooner was the servant gone than Ringham hastened to a window and looked out into the garden. The girl was no longer there.

He stepped towards the drawing-room door. There was still time to overtake her; she could not have walked many paces away. He had grasped the handle, was on the point of opening the door with the thought to follow, when a light footfall on the stairs caused him to hesitate. Could it be? The footfall reminded him strangely of the one he had heard upon the stone steps under the lamp in Austin Friars on the previous night.

SOME EARLY CONTRIBUTORS TO 'CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL.'

THOUGH we have lately had endless reviews of the past sixty years in every department of national life, it may not be out of place to cast a rapid backward glance over another sphere of activity which could not be included in any general public survey, and which covers almost sixty-five years of hard, persistent, and successful literary effort in the production of *Chambers's Journal* since its first issue in 1832. No one not already behind the scenes can possibly understand the amount of time, money, pains, and energy necessary for this work, so much of which seems apparently thrown away on useless, or at least unused, voluntary contributions returned to the authors. An article, 'Some Notable Beginners in *Chambers's Journal*' (No. 577, January 19, 1895), touched the fringe of this subject, and mentioned a few of the more recent coadjutors and writers.

It is our privilege now to go a little farther back and glean some interesting facts and items about an earlier race of contributors who flourished when the present generation of readers were in their cradle or yet unborn. Scarcely a subject of general interest can be mentioned that has not at one time or another found a place in these columns, and often more than once. There were magazines before *Chambers's Journal*; but probably because lacking in that wholesome, practical, and independent tone so necessary to existence, one by one they disappeared, leaving it still flourishing amongst an ever-increasing host of new, able, and popular claimants for public favour. It is to be hoped that the same continuity of purpose and endeavour are to be found in its pages to-day. It goes without saying that no effort will be spared to make these pages all that they should be.

The editor and proprietor of an American magazine which circulates something like 700,000 a month said the other day that in beginning his periodical he determined from the first to give the people what they wanted, and not what he thought they ought to have—a rock upon which many editors and publishers have struck and suffered shipwreck. The secret of the success of Mr Newnes lies in the same direction, as he has acknowledged. High-flown articles have been the death of many a periodical. Our American editor watched for indications of popular taste, and to the best of his ability met the need. Taste, and the ability to gratify it, have changed since 1832; one can now buy for sixpence an amount of well-illustrated letterpress which could not then be had for a guinea; only there seems a mad race amongst the illustrated magazines to copy and cut out one another. No sooner does a popular feature in one magazine 'catch on' than it is at once imitated; and the high prices given by these magazines are mainly for fiction by writers who have earned a high position. There may also be truth in the criticism that in magazine production the periodical is now less literary than in Thackeray's time, and that sensation in the form of very light literature and various eccentricities are looked to in order to catch and hold a fickle public.

Mr E. Marston, of Sampson Low & Co., in a recent review of his publishing career, noted the fact that his firm had spent in his time at least £300,000 in advertising. William and Robert Chambers made little or no use of names or newspaper columns for advertising purposes. A good and sensible article was welcomed from whatever quarter it came. Their work was allowed to witness for itself and make its own way. Many valuable names were thus shrouded in anonymity. A good thing generally does make its way; but such a policy would be impossible to-day. They worked hard and cheerfully at their self-appointed task. Camilla Toulmin (Mrs Newton Crosland), early associated with the *Journal*, may be a partial observer when she says that 'seldom, I think, have two brothers done such good in the world.' With much criticism, they had abundant encouragement in their labours, around which was developed the flourishing business of to-day. They both put their own hand to the plough, William after a sternly practical fashion, Robert with a literary grace, adaptability, and geniality

which have not since been surpassed. William Chambers (see *Memoir of W. and R. Chambers*, 15th edition, 1897) was the first to acknowledge this, while he edited, arranged, and wrote articles of general instruction and superintended the ordinary details of business. The important point was that each in his own groove correctly gauged the taste of the reading public. Robert Chambers revived the eighteenth century essay with success; and Mr Payn, who ought to know, says he never knew a man who did so many different kinds of literary work so well. In all his work he showed the saving gift of humour, mixed with common-sense. After Leitch Ritchie and Mr James Payn, Mr William Chambers, assisted by his nephew, the late Mr Robert Chambers, junior, returned to the earlier and more successful methods, which excellent traditions, with certain modifications to adapt them to the current public taste, are continued by Mr C. E. S. Chambers, the present editor.

William and Robert Chambers had noted wherein the current cheap papers fell short, and determined that their *Journal* should instruct and elevate independently of mere passing amusement. With characteristic independence they endeavoured to be sufficient unto themselves; but as time went on and the work grew, they gradually gained a connection with some of the best writers of the day. Persistent earnestness of purpose and self-denial characterised these early labours, and they never relaxed their vigilance. Between 1832 and 1857 we find a great army of capable contributors, including William and Mary Howitt, Maria Edgeworth, Mrs John Ballantyne (three rambling articles on Sir Walter Scott, Agnes Strickland, Mary Russell Mitford, W. Carleton, Mrs Craik, Mrs Crowe, Percy B. St John, Robert Carruthers, Mayne Reid, Captain Basil Hall, Dr Charles Mackay, Mrs Opie, Selina Bunbury, David Masson, Frances Browne, Harriet Martineau, Albert Smith, and Mrs S. C. Hall, who overtopped all the early contributors in minor fiction before the advent of the serial story.

Camilla Toulmin (Mrs Newton Crosland), in her *Landmarks of a Literary Life*, has given a very pleasing account of the connection she formed with the Brothers Chambers in 1841. She characterised them both as Nature's gentlemen—born organisers and rulers. William, she thought, especially liked to rule, and Robert, for the sake of peace, generally yielded in trifling matters. She recalls a little incident that befell while she was residing with William Chambers. He had brought home the proof-sheets of a *Miscellany* number which was five pages short. This we learn from another source was 'A Sister of Rembrandt,' by Dinah Maria Mulock. Miss Toulmin, on being asked to supply additional matter, set to work, entered into the spirit of the narrative, and added the five additional pages, for which she was duly compensated.

Dinah Maria Mulock, author of *John Halifax, Gentleman*, was among the most famous of these early contributors, and between 1845 and 1857, when she came into notice as a novelist, contributed a vast number of poems, essays, sketches, and short stories. A *Woman's Thoughts about Women* appeared from week to week prior to its issue in volume form. Born in 1826 at Stoke-

upon-Trent, where her father was minister of a small congregation, Dinah Maria Mulock was in London in 1846, and Camilla Toulmin much admired the concentration of purpose she showed in her chosen line of literature. When everybody was disturbed in mind, and wondering what was to come next on Louis Philippe being hurled from his throne in France, the young novelist 'buried herself in her books' as she continued writing her novel, *The Ogdovies*. A collection of some of her early tales recently appeared under the title of *The Half-Caste*. She had an established place in public esteem when married to Mr George Lillie Craik, of the publishing firm of Macmillan & Co., and died, universally regretted, at her home of Shortlands, near Bromley, in 1887. Dr Garnett has said that 'tender and philanthropic and at the same time energetic and practical womanhood of ordinary life has never had a more sufficient representative.'

Julia Kavanagh, the novelist, found a home for many of her early contributions in *Chambers's*. Born at Thurles in 1824, she came to London, and then moved to Paris, where she gained a good working knowledge of French life. In 1844, like Miss Mulock, she determined to earn her bread by literature. To *Chambers's Miscellany* she contributed, amongst other tracts, the sketch of 'The Bastille' and the 'Montyon Prizes.' After her death at Nice in 1877, her mother presented her portrait to the National Gallery of Ireland.

In the last days of 1839 Hugh Miller was appointed the editor of the *Witness*, an Edinburgh Non-intrusion newspaper, for which, during his sixteen years' editorship, he wrote about a thousand articles, more thoughtful, beautiful, and finely compacted than the usual newspaper leader. He was joined in Edinburgh by his wife and little daughter in 1840. But his early contributions to the *Journal*, although some of them were written at Cromarty, were despatched from his lodgings, Mrs Knott's, 2 St Patrick Square, in the south side of Edinburgh. In 1838 and 1839 he contributed papers on his bosom friend 'George Ross,' 'Mermaid,' 'Dropping Cave,' two papers called 'Gropings of a Working-man in Geology,' and three papers entitled 'Walks out of Town.' The 'Gropings,' one of which was sent in as 'My First Year of Labour,' are perhaps the most interesting and remarkable of the series, as they contain a forecast of his famous autobiography, *My Schools and Schoolmasters*, and the first draft of the narrative of how he became a geologist, giving in all their freshness the impressions of his first days spent as a young workman in Cromarty sandstone quarries. In this connection they may be compared with a paper of a similar kind by Sir Archibald Geikie, relating a visit in boyhood to the limestone quarries near Loanhead, which also shaped his life and made him a geologist. This article is contained in *Geological Sketches at Home and Abroad*.

In sending in these two last papers Hugh Miller wrote to Robert Chambers describing them as 'mere details of fact; but you may deem them curious, and they are suited to do at least no harm to that portion of the working classes which you include among your readers. The content which is merely an indolent acquiescence in one's lot is so questionable a virtue that it seems

better suited to the irrational animals than to men. The content, on the other hand, which is an active enjoyment of our lot cannot be recommended too strongly. And it is the latter virtue, if virtue it may be called, that my papers attempt to inculcate. True, it leads to no Whittington-and-the-Cat sort of results, but it does better, it leads to happiness, a result decidedly more final than a coach-and-six.'

Robert William Jamieson, the father of 'Dr Jim' of Rhodesian fame, contributed his famous article on 'Who Wrote Shakespeare?' to No. 449, August 7, 1852. He was then in practice in the legal profession at 5 North Charlotte Street, Edinburgh. When admitted a member of the Society of Writers to the Signet, in 1829, his name was spelt *Jamieson*; the *i* was afterwards dropped. The son of Mr Thomas Jamieson, soap-boiler, Leith, where he was born in 1805, he was educated at the High School and University of Edinburgh, and seems to have forsaken the law in favour of journalism and authorship, as he was editor of the *Wigtownshire Free Press* from 1855 to 1861, when he removed to England, residing at Sudbury, and afterwards in London, where he died at 12 Earl's Court Terrace, Kensington, 10th December 1868. Lord Chancellor Campbell thought him the best hustings speaker he ever heard, and he seems to have been a vigorous Radical, and engaged in the anti-slavery and anti-Corn-law movements. By his marriage to the daughter of Major-General Pringle of Symington he had eleven children. A blank-verse poem, *Nimrod* (1848); a novel, *The Curse of Gold* (1854); and a tragedy, *Timoleon* (1852), are now forgotten. He contributed the papers on 'Alexander the Great,' 'Holyrood,' and the 'Palatinate' to *Chambers's Repository*, besides other miscellaneous articles to *Chambers's Journal*.

Over such a period there has, of course, been a vast amount of correspondence with distinguished and undistinguished persons. We have only space for one or two specimens.

John Galt wrote from Greenock, 26th August 1836, offering a long poem on the deliverance of Scotland by Bruce, which he intended to inscribe to the Scottish peasantry, and which he thought not unsuitable for *Chambers's*. 'All its incidents are historical, except the very first, which, however, is probable, and the sentiments of the characters are as lifelike as I can make them. But then it is in three parts, and each part will fill nearly a page of your publication. It is therefore necessary to ask if you will insert it and the inscription at three different times in sequence. If so, I will send it on condition that you send me in return a few copies. My sons are abroad, and I wish to send them copies.' In a postscript the author added that, 'if not the best heroic poem ever written, it will be the cheapest, for its length, ever published.' This might be so, but it was entirely foreign to this publication to print such a long poem, and if the policy of inserting articles which cost nothing had ruled, the days of the periodical had been numbered.

On the strength of a report that Robert Chambers was growing weary of the labour connected with the *Journal* essays, Thomas De Quincey sent the following offer, which was dated 23d January 1839, from the Sanctuary, Miss

Miller's lodgings, Holyrood Gardens. 'Nobody,' he writes, 'could have presumed to press his aid upon so eminent a public instructor as yourself in any other character than that of one who happened to have disposable leisure offering to relieve another who had too little. If upon that footing you really have any wish for aid, I should be happy to furnish a series of essays on Life, Manners, Literature, and other subjects; and as I know experimentally that the designing and shaping of subjects is in itself a laborious thing, I should be happy to make that a part of my undertaking. . . . I am at present, and for three or more months to come, condemned to fight off creditors with one hand, whilst with the other I furnish support to nine persons daily, and hence I am obliged to court all literary labours within my reach. The first essay I propose to write would be entitled "Conversation as an Art." There is no evidence that this proposal came to anything.

Thomas Carlyle, recovering from an 'ugly attack of influenza,' wrote on 27th May 1852, requesting Robert Chambers for information regarding the ballad of 'Childe Etin,' and in some remarks on the state of Paternoster Row uttered this prophecy, which has been amply fulfilled, that 'there is likely to be a great cheapening of books by-and-by, and an immense increase of reading in consequence, which, if it was certain that we should get truth and sense to read, . . . would be an indisputable benefit to mankind.'

A note from Paris, in December 1853, in the clear and beautiful hand of Thackeray, addressed to 'Robert Chambers, Edinburgh,' runs as follows:

'MY DEAR CHAMBERS,—Will you send the above scrap to Mr Payn, as I don't remember where in Forbes Street he lives? And, in asking you to perform this kind office for me, will you permit me to seize the opportunity afforded me of expressing to you, Mrs Chambers, and your somewhat numerous family, my wish that you may enjoy many happy recurrences of a season which Christians venerate, but which you do not, I believe, acknowledge in Scotland, and the assurance of profound consideration with which I have the honour to be, sir, madam, and your kind, merry, pretty young ladies, your faithful servant,
W. M. T.'

R. L. Stevenson was never a contributor to *Chambers's*, but he evidently wished that some of his friends might be, as the following letter to Robert Chambers (junior), from Skerryvore, Bournemouth, will show:

'DEAR SIR,—I do not know if you ever observed me, but I have more than once followed your triumphant progress round a golfing green; and though this would hardly stand for an introduction, I dare say you know me by name. The paper enclosed is by a friend of mine, and it seemed to me very suitable to *Chambers's Journal*. Will you look at it, and let me know?

'This is a very incongruous letter altogether. The last incongruity is that I should put this infinitesimal rag of paper into such a mighty continent as the envelope.—Yours truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.'

The 'rag of paper' had the heading of 'British

Museum' run out, and Skerryvore inserted in its place.

Mr James Payn has already, in his 'Literary Recollections' and elsewhere, given his views and reminiscences of the editing of *Chambers's Journal*. He writes very kindly of his predecessor, Leitch Ritchie, and of Robert Chambers. But some of his Scottish stories are very funny to northern readers—a good deal funnier than they were ever intended to be; and he has made the most of the east wind in Edinburgh and the gloom of a Scottish Sunday, Russel of the *Scotsman*, and of Dr John Hill Burton as a contributor. The author of the *History of Scotland*, by the way, was writing in *Chambers's* as early as 1833, and later on such varied subjects as a pedestrian excursion in Switzerland or Queen Mary's Letters. He wrote school-books and abridgments under the name of Dr White, compiled much of the information in *Oliver & Boyd's Almanac*, and in 1849 wrote for Messrs Chambers what his wife considered the best of all his productions—his *Political and Social Economy*. A paper on 'National Education,' however, for one of their series, did not find favour with William Chambers, who recast, then rejected it, and sent the bones to an outside contributor as materials for an altogether new paper.

James Payn had a good team, and doubtless deserved from his geniality and kindness the silver inkstand he had from the contributors. One example of his kindness and helpfulness may be mentioned. In his 'Recollections' he alludes to having been much impressed by a realistic article on a night spent in a Thames tunnel. He made inquiry, and found that the writer knew only too well, from hard practical experience, what he was writing about. He was the means of bringing the author to Edinburgh, where he secured a situation for him at two hundred pounds a year under Mr Russel of the *Scotsman*. There he only remained for a year, and Mr Payn was made aware at a later date that he was still living, and so far a popular writer, by the receipt of a presentation copy of his *Episodes in an Obscure Life*. There is no reason now for withholding this contributor's name, as Mr Payn has done; this was Richard Rowe, about whom the *Academy* remarked, after his death in a London hospital in 1879, that many a one has attained fame and fortune who has not possessed a tithe of his genius. He wrote much under many aliases in the magazines of Mr Alexander Strahan, sometimes as plain Richard Rowe, or the Riverside Visitor, Charles Camden, and Edward Howe. His early experiences in Australia were utilised in books and articles, and in such contributions to *Chambers's* as 'Across the World,' 'Memoirs of Melbourne,' and 'Sydney and its Suburbs.' This son of a Wesleyan Methodist minister of Doncaster also wrote about twenty story-books for young people, besides countless periodical contributions.

Mr Payn had besides as friends and contributors such writers as Dutton Cook, Walter Thornbury, Robert Black, W. Moy Thomas, Rev. F. Jacox, F. Talbot, Arthur Locker, Tom Hood; Carlyle's next-door neighbour, Mrs Gilchrist; Rev. Harry Jones, Gerald Massey, John Holinshed, Hesba Stretton, R. A. Proctor, G. M. Fenn, T. (now Sir) Wemyss Reid. Gerald Massey reviewed in sympathetic fashion Alexander Smith's *City Poems* in

1857; and one of the best of modern parodies, with the famous refrain of 'Butter and Eggs, and a Pound of Cheese,' by C. S. Calverley, appeared in 1869. There was much genial wisdom in Mr Payn's advice to young literary aspirants under the title of 'To Persons about to Become Famous,' and his *Lost Sir Massingberd* and other novels took a strong hold of the average reader.

The Rev. E. J. Hardy contributed a paper, 'How to be Happy though Married,' which at a later date became the title of his well-known and successful volume. Between 1876 and 1878 Mr Stanley J. Weyman wrote on such subjects as 'My Scouts,' 'On the Cherwell,' 'Reading at Oxford,' 'Nicknames of History,' 'Life at a Crammery,' 'Ugly Duckling Theory,' and 'University Etiquette,' while amongst recent novelists have been J. B. Harwood, T. Speight, Mrs Hoey, D. Christie Murray, Grant Allen, S. Baring-Gould, Mrs Oliphant, Sir Walter Besant, Anthony Hope, E. W. Hornung, F. Whishaw, and John Buchan.

Not every contributor has been so good-natured as Mrs Crowe, who replied, in acknowledging some proofs, that she never interfered 'with any alterations the editor thought right to make.' She thought the author worked for money and not for fame, 'and if you purchase my wares I think you have a right to do what you please with them.' This is scarcely a view that will find general favour nowadays.

THE STORY OF THE MAROONS.

WHEN the island of Jamaica was conquered by the English in the seventeenth century most of the Spanish inhabitants removed to Cuba. The greater number of the African slaves, of whom the Spaniards were said to possess 1500, forsook the plantations and took up their abode in the mountains. There they remained in a state of wild freedom, living by plunder, and were known by the name of Maroons. The word 'Maroon' has been variously derived from the Spanish word *marrano*, signifying a hog, the Maroons being great hunters of the wild boar, and from *cimarón*, which in Spanish means wild or unruly.

From their mountain fastnesses the Maroons harassed the British, murdering the soldiers whenever they found opportunity. In the later part of the year 1656 the army gained some trifling success against them; but this was immediately retaliated by the slaughter of forty soldiers, cut off as they were carelessly rambling from headquarters. All hope of succour having been taken from them by the final overthrow of the Spaniards by Colonel D'Oyley in the following year, the main body of the Maroons, under the command of a negro named Juan de Bolas, surrendered to the English on terms of pardon and freedom. A large party, however, remained in their mountain retreats, where, their numbers being augmented not only by natural increase, but also by fugitive slaves, they became a terror to the whole island, and by their barbarities, murders, and outrages intimidated the whites from venturing to any considerable distance from the sea-coast.

In 1736 they had grown so formidable, under a very able leader named Cudjoe, that it

was deemed expedient to strengthen the colony against them by two regiments of regular troops, which were afterwards formed into independent companies and employed, with other hired bodies and the whole of the militia, in their reduction.

All attempts to subdue them having failed, and both parties having grown heartily weary of the conflict, Governor Trelawney, by the advice of the principal gentlemen of the island, in 1738 proposed overtures of peace with the Maroon chiefs. Colonel Guthrie of the militia and Captain Saddler of the regulars were accordingly deputed to open a communication with Cudjoe. The glens or recesses to which the Maroons had retired were called in West Indian phrase cockpits. The passages into these glens were extremely narrow. Ledges of rock, in which there were numerous crevices, lined the defiles which afforded protection to the Maroons, and completely screened them from the observation and fire of an attacking force. These glens or cockpits extended in a line, which enabled the negroes when driven from one to betake themselves to another. Through one of these defiles Colonel Guthrie advanced with a large force, having first conveyed intelligence of his approach to Cudjoe. When sufficiently near the Maroon huts to be heard, Colonel Guthrie called in a loud voice that he had come to treat for peace and to offer them fair and honourable terms. Dr Russell, a gentleman known to the Maroons, then came forward, and was presently met by Cudjoe, surrounded by several of his band. Cudjoe was of low stature, uncommonly stout, with strong African features and a peculiar wildness in his manner. He had a hump on his back, which was partly covered with the tattered remains of a blue coat, of which the skirts and the sleeves below the elbow were wanting. He wore a pair of loose drawers that did not reach his knees, and a small round hat without a rim. On his right side hung a cow's horn with powder, and a bag of cut slugs. He wore no shirt, and his clothes, as well as that part of his skin that was exposed, were covered with the red dirt of the cockpits. His men were as dirty as himself. All carried guns and wore cutlasses. After a conversation between Dr Russell and the Maroon chief relative to the proposed peace, Colonel Guthrie and some of his officers approached unarmed, when Cudjoe threw himself on the ground and asked pardon. A treaty was then concluded, by virtue of which two thousand five hundred acres of land were assigned to the Maroons in different parts of the island, and perfect freedom assured to them and to their successors. The Maroons were required to aid the government in repelling invasions and in suppressing internal rebellions. Two European superintendents were appointed to reside among them, and Cudjoe was confirmed as chief commander.

For fifty years they continued to live peaceably. It is probable they were chiefly induced to remain quiet by the great encouragement that was held out to them for the apprehending of runaway slaves, the premium allowed to them being three pounds per head, and in the permission to range over the uncultivated country without interruption.

In appearance they were a fine set of men. Their demeanour was lofty, their walk firm,

and their persons erect. Their sight was wonderfully acute and their hearing remarkably quick.

Their language was a barbarous, dissonant compound of African dialects, with a mixture of Spanish and broken English.

They were not Christians. They had little idea of any kind of religion. They believed in Accompong, whom they called the God of heaven, and, in common with all the nations of Africa, also in *obi*, a repulsive compound of magic and witchcraft.

They had no marriage ceremony. A man had as many wives as he chose to support, limited only by the obligation imposed by usage, that whatever presents he made to one he was obliged to make to all; but the Maroons, like all other savage nations, regarded their wives as so many beasts of burden, and felt no more concern at the loss of one of them than a white planter would have felt at the loss of a bullock.

In the month of July 1795 two Maroons from Trelawney-Town (a Maroon settlement), having stolen some pigs, were apprehended, sent to Montego Bay, and there tried for the offence. Having been found guilty, the magistrates ordered each of them to receive thirty-nine lashes on the bare back. They were accordingly whipped in the workhouse by the black overseer of the workhouse negroes, the person whose duty it was to inflict punishment on such occasions.

On their return to Trelawney-Town the offenders gave an account of what had passed. The whole body of Maroons immediately assembled, and after violent debates and altercations among themselves, a party of them repaired to Captain Croskell, the superintendent, and ordered him, in the name of the whole, to quit the town forthwith, under pain of death. The superintendent retired to a neighbouring plantation, from whence by friendly messages he attempted to pacify the excited negroes, but without effect. The Maroons sent a written defiance to the magistrates of Montego Bay, threatening to attack the town on the 20th of that month (July). In the meanwhile an attempt was made on Captain Croskell's life, and he very narrowly escaped.

In consequence of these proceedings the militia were called out. While they were waiting for orders one of the Maroons, armed with a lance, made his appearance, and on the part of the insurgents demanded a conference at Trelawney-Town. This demand was acceded to, and a conference took place on the following day. The Maroons demanded reparation for the indignity offered to their whole body by the magistrates at Montego Bay by ordering two of their number to be whipped by the black overseer of the workhouse in the presence of felon and fugitive negro slaves; an addition to the lands they possessed; the dismissal of Captain Croskell, and the appointment in his stead of their former superintendent. The gentlemen attending the conference promised to state these grievances to the commander-in-chief and to the legislature, and after distributing a considerable sum of money among them, returned to Montego Bay. The Maroons professed to be perfectly satisfied.

But it soon became evident that the Maroons were actuated solely by treachery in demanding a

conference at all. They had learned that a fleet of a hundred and fifty ships was to sail for Great Britain on the morning of the 26th, and they knew that very few British troops remained in the island except the 83d Regiment, and that that regiment was under immediate orders to embark for San Domingo; their object, therefore, was to quiet suspicion until the July fleet had sailed and the regulars fairly departed.

The very day the conference was held the Maroons began tampering with the negroes on the numerous plantations in the neighbourhood of Montego Bay. Information of this nature was transmitted from many respectable quarters, but the government felt such confidence in the fidelity of the Maroons that the troops were embarked as originally intended. In the course of the two succeeding days, however, such intelligence was received at Government House as left no possible room to doubt the treachery of these people. A fast sailing-boat from the east end of the island, furnished with oars for voyaging at night when the land-breeze fails, was at once sent in pursuit of the transports. This boat came up with the transports on the 2d of August, and delivered orders to Captain Pigot, of the *Success*, to change his course and proceed immediately with the transports to Montego Bay. Captain Pigot at once obeyed.

The 83d Regiment, consisting of upwards of one thousand effective men, commanded by Colonel Fitch, landed at Montego Bay on the 4th of August. The sudden and unexpected arrival of so powerful a reinforcement at so critical a moment at once changed the aspect of affairs. But further measures were adopted; and by the advice of a council of war, composed chiefly of members of the House of Assembly, the governor put the whole island under martial law.

The councils of the Maroons became divided. The whole of the people of the town of Accompong declared in favour of the whites. It was determined, however, by a very great majority of the Trelawney-Town Maroons to fight the *Buccras*—that is, the white people.

The commander-in-chief, previous to any hostile movement, determined once more to try to effect an accommodation. Accordingly on the 8th of August he sent a summons to the Trelawney-Town Maroons, commanding every male capable of bearing arms to appear before him at Montego Bay on the 12th day of August, there to submit to his Majesty's mercy. In case of non-compliance, Trelawney-Town was to be burned to the ground and a reward offered for their heads. Three days afterwards thirty-eight of the Maroons, chiefly old men, surrendered themselves to the governor's mercy at a place called Vaughan's-Fields, and frankly declared that the rest of the town were determined on war. The ensuing night the insurgents commenced hostilities by setting fire themselves to their town and attacking the outposts of the army.

On the 12th of August a detachment of four hundred men, under the command of Colonel Sandford, was despatched to destroy some of their provision-grounds, but they found everything uprooted already. The detachment thereupon attempted to rejoin the main body by traversing a defile, but they were met by volley after volley from unseen hands. Colonel Sandford, Quarter-

master McBride, and a number of non-commissioned officers and privates of the 18th Dragoons and the 20th Regiment of foot, and Colonel Gallimore and 'a number of respectable gentlemen of the militia,' were killed, while scores of others were wounded. The forests which skirted Trelawney-Town were subsequently cleared, and the artillery shelled the interior. The Maroons withdrew, and reappeared higher up the hills.

By the death of Colonel Sandford the command, in the governor's absence, devolved upon Colonel Fitch; but the Maroons found means to evade his vigilance. They had now established their headquarters at the cockpits, in the caverns of which they secreted their women and children and deposited their ammunition. From this retreat they sent out small parties, who employed themselves in prowling about the country in search of provisions and in setting fire by night to such houses and plantations as were unprovided with a sufficient guard. Many white people fell into their hands, all of whom were murdered in cold blood, without any distinction of sex or regard to age.

But perhaps no one circumstance in the course of the war excited greater indignation than the death of Colonel Fitch, who, while attempting, with a party of the 83d Regiment and a body of Accompong Maroons, to penetrate the forests with the purpose of extending the military posts, fell into ambuscade and was killed. With Colonel Fitch perished Captain Brissett and a number of the rank and file. Several officers and men were wounded, and two of the detachment who had the misfortune to fall alive into the hands of the Maroons were put to death with circumstances of outrageous barbarity.

The General Assembly was convened in the latter end of September, and their first deliberations were directed to the subject of the Maroon rebellion. An expedient recommended was that of employing dogs to discover the concealment of the Maroons, and prevent the fatal effects which resulted from their mode of fighting in ambuscade. The Assembly were not unaware that the measure of calling in such auxiliaries would probably give rise to much observation and animadversion in the mother-country; but necessity was their warrant—and the event proved that they were right. They therefore resolved to send to Cuba for one hundred dogs, and to engage a sufficient number of Spanish huntsmen to attend and direct their operations.

On the death of Colonel Fitch, the chief conduct of the war, in the absence of the governor, was entrusted to Major-general Walpole, whose zeal and activity in a very short time reduced the enemy to the last extremity.

The caves in which the Maroons had concealed their ammunition and provisions and secured their women and children could be reached only by a path down a steep rock one hundred and fifty feet in almost perpendicular height, and were therefore inaccessible to the whites. Strange as it may appear, this obstacle was surmounted by the Maroons without difficulty. Habituated to employ their naked feet with singular effect in climbing up trees and precipices, they had acquired a dexterity in the practice which to British troops was altogether astonishing and wholly

inimitable. But although the country to which the Maroons had retired was one of the most impracticable on the face of the earth, it was entirely destitute of springs and rivers. All the water which the rains had left in the hollows of the rocks was exhausted, and the enemy's only resource was in the leaves of the wild pine-apple, *Tillandsia maxima*. The leaves of this plant catch and retain water from every shower; each leaf contains about a quart; but even this resource was at length exhausted, and the sufferings of the rebels for want both of water and food were excessive. By the unremitting diligence and indefatigable exertions of the troops, all or most of the passes to other parts of the country were effectually occupied.

In spite of all these precautions, however, a rebel captain named Johnson found means to conduct a small detachment into the parish of St Elizabeth, and to set fire to many of the plantations in that district. On the 14th of December the commissioner who went to Havana for assistance arrived at Montego Bay with forty Spanish chasseurs and about one hundred dogs. These strange auxiliaries were at once marched to the scene of rebellion. The most extraordinary accounts were immediately spread of the terrific appearance and savage nature of the blood-hounds, of which the following is an example: 'One of the hounds being unmuzzled by his chasseur-master to allow him to drink, a woman, a sutler of the camp, menaced the dog with a stick as he passed by. Instantly the dog seized her by the throat and so tore her that she died, the dog being disengaged from his hold only by cutting off his head.' The story of this incident, and a hundred others of a similar nature, soon reached the mountain fastnesses, and made an unexpected impression on the minds of the insurgents.

The Maroons were a brave race, and had no objection to fighting, so long as they had only to fight men. But on hearing of the new foes they had to encounter they solicited terms, and eventually laid down their arms and surrendered as prisoners of war. But before doing so they demanded certain conditions, which were granted by General Walpole. One of these conditions was that they should not be sent out of the island. The legislature of Jamaica, however, would not allow them to remain, and voted that they should be sent into exile. General Walpole was so indignant at this conduct that he refused to accept a sword, valued at five hundred guineas, which the legislature wished to present him with as a mark of their sense of his services.

Eventually the government of Jamaica, with the consent of the imperial authorities, decided to deport the Maroons to Nova Scotia, and the governor of that province, Sir John Wentworth, was instructed to make provision for their settlement.

The Maroons sailed from Jamaica for Halifax in the beginning of June 1796. Two commissioners were sent with them to superintend arrangements. They arrived in Halifax on the 23d of July, after a voyage of six weeks from the West Indies. They were well provisioned and had abundant clothing. The sum of £25,000, Jamaica currency, was placed to their credit by

the island government to meet the present emergency.

The Jamaica government acquired the title of a tract of land in the neighbourhood of Preston, Halifax county, on which they erected buildings. In the course of the autumn the Maroons were comfortably housed, and for a time seemed contented. The governor at first thought very favourably of them. He described them as 'healthy, peaceful and orderly, and highly delighted with the country.' He interested himself very much in their welfare. He had many interviews with them, in which he gave them the best of advice. He applied to the British government, and obtained an allowance of £240 a year to support a school, and to provide instruction for them in the principles of religion. His object was, according to his own account, to 'reclaim them to the Church of England, and to disseminate piety, morality, and loyalty among them.' He sent to England for clothing for them, and exerted himself in every possible way to make them comfortable. But after Sir John Wentworth had had a year's experience of the Maroons, his faith in them was entirely gone. In one of his letters to his official superiors he says of them: 'In fact, they do not wish to live by industry; they prefer war and mutiny.'

Year by year they became more turbulent and troublesome. Sir John had raised a regiment in Nova Scotia for the service of the Crown, and now he found use for it at home. He was obliged to send a detachment of fifty men to Preston to put down a serious disturbance that had occurred there and to restore order.

It soon became evident that these people could not remain in Nova Scotia, and shortly afterwards negotiations, at the instance of the Colonial government, were opened between the imperial authorities and the Sierra Leone Company, which led to an arrangement to send the Maroons to the coast of Africa. To that settlement a number of negroes had been removed from Nova Scotia eight years previously, and proved so extremely turbulent as to endanger the existence of the colony; hence the Sierra Leone Company, thinking that the importation of the Maroons would serve to keep them in check, consented to receive the Maroons on condition that the expenses of their settlement should be borne by the British government. They accordingly embarked at Halifax in August 1800, and arrived at Sierra Leone in the month of October, after an expenditure of forty-six thousand pounds by the island of Jamaica, and after a greater outlay by the imperial government. The expenses attending their maintenance to the provincial government during their residence in Nova Scotia were ten thousand pounds a year. On their arrival in Sierra Leone, what were called the Nova Scotia blacks were in open rebellion. The Maroons proved faithful, and fought so bravely in support of the government that the insurrection was speedily suppressed.

About two years later their behaviour and character were the subject of a report made by a committee of the House of Commons in England. Their conduct was much applauded, and their character spoken of in the highest terms. They are represented as 'active and intrepid, prodigal of their lives, confident of their strength, proud of the character of their body, and fond,

though not jealous, of their independence.' These qualities were probably the result of a century and a half of quasi-independence in the mountains of Jamaica, to which country their thoughts were ever turned. They spent in the African colony about the same period that the Israelites passed in the wilderness, and forty years after their arrival the great bulk of them returned to Jamaica.

MESSAGES FROM THE SEA.

By W. ALLINGHAM.

SOME simple system of communication with the outer world has apparently been found necessary by seamen ever since ships dared leave the land below the horizon. Bottles have frequently served the desired purpose; though very few indeed of those thrown overboard, with a letter carefully enclosed, ever reach the shore. Occasionally, however, most important information is conveyed in this way. As a general rule, these bottle-messengers get broken on the beach by the savage sea, or the salt water eats through a flaw in the cork, or barnacles adhere in increasing growth and sink them. Some lie unheeded for many months on a lonely shore; and it is on record that a bottle containing a message despatched by an American captain in 1837, was picked up on the coast of Ireland just twenty-one years later. Securely-corked bottles, first ballasted with lead or sand inside, and subsequently dipped into hot pitch, seem preferable for the purpose. A slight stick, about fifteen inches long, securely lashed to the bottle's neck, would bear a tiny flag to attract attention. The lashing and the lower portion of this miniature flagstaff should be well covered with pitch. Bottles specially supplied for this ocean mail by the United States Hydrographic Office are ballasted so that they always float in an upright position. A small indicator fastened on the neck displays the initial letters 'H. O.' and a distinguishing number. When sighted from the deck of a passing ship the number only is noted and reported to the Hydrographer at the Washington Bureau of Navigation. The bottle is not necessarily picked up until it reaches dry land.

Most interesting charts setting forth the drifts of bottle-messengers have been published of recent years by the United States Hydrographic Office, especially in 1891, under the superintendence of the then Hydrographer, Commander Richardson Clover, U.S.N.; and in 1895 and 1896, under the present Hydrographer, Captain C. D. Sigsbee, U.S.N. Taken collectively, these bottle-drifts serve to illustrate the two most marked features of the surface circulation of the North Atlantic Ocean. First there is the vast whirl extending from the equator on the south to the parallel of 48° on the north, which completely encloses the whole waste of waters between the trade-winds and the anti-trades. This is the region known to navigators as the Sargasso Sea, where the early writers fondly imagined that the caravels of Columbus were so much impeded by gulf-weed as to necessitate a passage being cut with hatchets. Subject to variable winds and erratic currents, the central portion of this North Atlantic eddy is even now avoided by sailing-

ships. Secondly, there is the extension of the Gulf Stream, which leaves the northern limit of the main eddy in the neighbourhood of 30° W., and moves north-eastward, thus skirting the shores of Iceland on the west, and Scotland and Norway on the east. Call it by whatever name we will, this warm current tends to keep open Norwegian harbours, so that whaling-ships have had a clear passage as far north as 74° N., in 4° E., while at the same time harbours of North America were closed by ice even as far to the southward as the latitude of Bordeaux.

A bottle despatched from the steamship *Guildhall* on 31st May, 1894, when in 46° N., 31° W., almost midway between Brest and Newfoundland, was picked up on 13th February 1896 at Antigua, after a drift of about four thousand five hundred miles. It had evidently passed close to the Azores, the Canary Islands, and the Cape Verdes on the way. Another, thrown overboard from the sloop *Sapolio* on 20th July 1892, travelled eastward towards the Azores, and thence, as in the previous instance, until it was recovered near Turk's Island, north of Haiti, on 8th February 1896, after a drift of nearly six thousand miles. A bottle-message from the sailing-ship *St Enoch* is probably the most interesting of the eighty-two drifts shown on the United States chart just issued. It was sent off when some seven hundred miles west of Sierra Leone, under the influence of the well-known Guinea current, setting eastward on to the African land. The master of this vessel noted on the message that she had experienced an easterly current of thirty-six miles during the previous day. Hence there is reason to suppose that this messenger was swept eastward until some incident occurred to transfer it to a current setting in a westerly direction. Once on the latter route, however, it passed leisurely along through the passages of the Windward Isles, escaping contact with any land; followed the trend of the Atlantic coast of North America till clear of Newfoundland; and thence onwards to Totabrough Walls, Shetland Islands, where it was found on 20th March 1896, after having accomplished a record drift of nearly eight thousand miles in less than one thousand days.

The precise course followed by a belated bottle-messenger is necessarily extremely difficult to define. The geographical positions of departure and of arrival are generally the only two points accurately known along the track. A similar objection cannot rightly be urged against charted drifts of derelict ships left to their fate during heavy gales, and keeping afloat in a waterlogged condition for many weeks. Several have come in this lonely state right across the North Atlantic from the United States coast to Europe, along the very routes affected by bottle-messengers. These abandoned ships, dangers drifting deviously, are observed frequently by passing vessels; their positions are duly reported to the American Hydrographic Office by shipmasters of every nation zealously co-operating therewith; and the tracks thus obtained are carefully delineated on the monthly Pilot Chart of the North Atlantic, supplied by the department to a large majority of the shipmasters navigating in the vicinity. A glance at the most recent issue of this valuable contribution to nautical literature puts the navigator on his guard. It is noteworthy that drifts

of derelict ships and bottle-messengers of Neptune's mail are almost identical. This is but another proof of the intimate connection between the motion of the sea-surface and the winds.

Bottles thrown overboard about ten degrees east of St John's, Newfoundland, keep a north-east course as a general rule. They come ashore anywhere from Valentia, on the west coast of Ireland, to the North Cape of Norway. One from the steamer *Sardinian* in July 1889 was found two hundred days later not far from Tromsø, after a drift of fifteen hundred miles. Another, from the same vessel in October, travelled twelve hundred miles in one hundred days, and was picked up within a short distance of the spot where the first reached the land. A bottle from the steamer *Britannia* on Christmas Day 1895, when about four hundred miles east of St John's, was discovered at one of the Shetland Islands on 28th March 1896, having drifted two thousand miles in ninety-four days. One from the steamer *Louisiana*, thrown overboard in January 1895, when midway between Newfoundland and the Azores, was picked up nearly four hundred days later a little south of Bergen. It had cleared the Shetlands and accomplished a drift of two thousand four hundred miles. A large number of similar drifts made by Neptune's mail-carriers are given on the United States Hydrographic Office chart. All of them go to show the extension of the relatively warm water of the Gulf Stream right up to the extreme north of Norway.

Another interesting feature brought to light by this study of bottle-drifts is the decided easterly set of the sea-surface all the way from Cape Finisterre to Scilly. Many a good ship has met her fate along this dangerous coast in consequence of the insidious landward motion of old ocean. The well-known liner *Drummond Castle*, lost with many valuable lives near Ushant, is the most recent example. For a long series of years navigators were led to believe in the existence of a current which followed the trend of the land from Cape Finisterre round the Bay of Biscay to Ushant, and thence onwards towards Ireland. It was known as Rennell's current. Later observations, however, quite disprove such a movement of the water, and Captain C. D. Sigsbee, U.S.N., the American Hydrographer, states that 'sufficient information as to the surface-drift of this most important region has now been gathered to enable us to state definitely that it is eastward into the English and St George's Channels, except when diverted or checked by persistent winds for a lengthy period.'

Bottle-messengers despatched from ships within five degrees of the equator, on either side, seldom fail to reach some place to the north-westward of Cape St Roque, at the north-east corner of Brazil. A few reach the land near Pernambuco and Careia; but as a rule they skirt the shores of Guinea and Venezuela, and thence through the Caribbean Sea into the Gulf of Mexico. The only southerly drift recorded is that of a bottle from the ship *Garsdale*, thrown over near the island of St Paul, on the equator, in August 1895, which was picked up between Bahia and Rio de Janeiro nearly eighty days later, after a drift of twelve hundred miles.

A bottle found on the west side of Lewis, in the

Hebrides, about eight miles from the Butt of Lewis, contained a message from a passenger on his way to the United States as follows: '*Ss. Ludgate Hill*, Sunday, June 12, 1892. Mid-Atlantic. All well. Left London June 4, 1892.—C. BURLEIGH TASSMAN.' The owners of the vessel subsequently wrote to say that Mr Tassman was a saloon passenger on their steamer, which on the date mentioned was in 47° 18' N., 39° 44' W. On 12th July 1892, when off the entrance to Belleisle Strait, homeward bound from Montreal in steamship *Sarnia*, an ordinary soda-water bottle containing a letter was thrown overboard by a passenger, Mr J. E. Muddock. It was picked up off the coast of Norway on 28th November 1893, and returned to sender from Bergen, after a drift of four thousand miles to the north-east in nearly five hundred days. A message sent from a Massachusetts village by Mr C. Maclean drifted out with the tide on 1st September 1887, and was found on the beach near San Fernando, Spain, on 28th February 1892. It eventually reached the United States Consul at Cadiz, who sent the letter to the Hydrographic Office, Washington. The straight line from departure to arrival is about three thousand miles; but this bottle must have traversed not less than four thousand miles by a circuitous route, thus affording an authentic instance of a drift from continent to continent, and not merely from a ship to some coast. Another of Neptune's mail-carriers found on the shore at Gweebarra, County Donegal, contained a United States form setting forth that it had been despatched by Mr J. Douglas, third officer of steamship *Hibernian*, on 27th May 1892, when in 54° 23' N., 26° 53' W. In returning the message, Major Porter pointed out that he had often picked up foreign nuts and curious seaweed on the beach at that place.

In November 1891 the barque *Callor Ou* left Hull. A few days later she sailed from Grimsby Roads, and disappeared. In January 1893 a wooden batten was found on the beach near Kilnsea bearing information written with lead pencil—on one side: 'Whoever picks this up shall know the *Callor Ou* was run down by an unknown steamer;' and on the other side: 'May the Lord comfort my mother. *Callor Ou* run down by an unknown steamer.—DAWSON. No more time. (Sinking.)' Dawson was an apprentice from Trinity House School, Hull, and Major Z. Scaping, the head-master, is said to have recognised the youngster's handwriting. A bottle recovered in 1893 contained the following message: '*Ship Buckingham*, 24th November 1890. Captain killed by a coolie on October 11 at 12.30 off the Shetland Islands. Ship at present off Bermuda, 45 days from Dundee, bound for New York. All well. If found, forward to Fred Seaborne, West Street, Newport, Pembroke, South Wales.' This ship belonged to Messrs Macvicar, Marshall, & Co., of Liverpool, who vouched for the handwriting as that of an apprentice named Seaborne on board their ship.

A bottle picked up by a native on Humana beach, New Zealand, between Margonin and Whangora, on 26th February 1894, contained a letter which was handed to Captain Farquhar of steamer *Clansman*: '*Barque Kirkhill*, lat. 33° 16' S., long. 166° 48' E., Newcastle bound to Callao, September 18, 1893. Finder is particu-

larly requested to report to Clement R. Wragge, F.R.G.S., Government Meteorologist, Brisbane, Queensland, saying when and where it was found. This paper was cast adrift by James Brennel, master. Two bottles were thrown over at the same time.' By a strange irony of fate, this message was wrapped up in a portion of a magazine cover bearing to the dusky native the legend, 'Good morning! Have you used Pears' Soap?' A small bottle found on the shore of the island of Gigha in February 1894 contained a paper on which was written with lead pencil: 'Sept. 1893, sinking in mid-Atlantic. *Horn Head* in collision, iceberg.—MATE.' This steamer was actually posted as missing on 25th October 1893, and icebergs were numerous that season along her track.

On 16th February 1894 a bottle containing the following message was found on Culla shore: 'Ss. *Assyrian*, from St John, N.F., towards Glasgow, with 26 shipwrecked French seamen on board. This day our latitude 53° 40' N., and longitude 29° 30' W., Aug. 17, '93.—S. M'LEON, Quartermaster.' A bottle picked up in Crosbies Bay, Antigua, on 24th June 1894, contained a filled-up printed form issued by the 'Deutsche Seewarte,' the German Hydrographic Office, for the purpose of testing ocean currents. It bore the following statement: 'This bottle, weighted with sand, was thrown overboard from the *Sisal*, Capt. Degener, on her voyage from Sta Catharina to Laguna on Feb. 25, 1894, in 5° 18' N., 48° 52' W.'

A resident of Capetown recently received a letter with a history. Written on Christmas Day 1894, it had been put into a bottle which was thrown overboard from the barque *Invercoe* in the Gulf of St Vincent four days later. On 14th February 1895 this missive of Neptune was picked up on Gambier beach, South Australia. The letter was at once forwarded to the person in Capetown to whom it was addressed. He received it safely within three months of despatch. On 9th June 1895 a tin canister found on the island of Burra, west of Shetland, contained ten letters for Glasgow, Harris, and England. The full amount for postage was enclosed, together with a note dated St Kilda, N.B., March 1, 1895, signed F. Gillies, requesting the finder to forward the letters. The distance from St Kilda to Shetland is three hundred miles. It is said that when vessels are unable to communicate with the inhabitants of the Westmann Islands by reason of bad weather, recourse is had to Neptune's mail in order to keep in touch with the outside world. A letter, accompanied by a small coin or a piece of tobacco, is placed in an empty bottle, which is then tightly corked and committed to the deep on the west or north coast. Owing to action of sea surface-current, the bottle-messenger, as a general rule, drifts to the coast of Iceland, landing near the small town of Eyranlakke, on the south-west coast. On 9th August 1895 a bottle of Neptune's ocean mail, picked up at Hirtshals, Denmark, was found to contain a letter written by a Shetland passenger on board the steamship *Lake Ontario*, and despatched out of curiosity, on 31st August 1893, when in 54° 10' N., 45° 43' W. This message was probably delayed by conflicting currents and tides after rounding the north of Scotland, or else remained unnoticed for a long interval. A bottle from the Atlantic

Transport Line Steamship *Manitoba*, Captain R. Griffith, sent away on 22d November 1895, in 49° N., 37° W., was found not far from Thurso on 13th April 1896, having averaged about ten miles' advance every day to the north-east. On 19th September 1896 there was picked up at Sandwick, Burra Isle, Shetland, a bottle containing an ocean-current report issued by the Hydrographic Office, Washington, and sent adrift by the German steamer *Venetia* just three months before when in 58° 31' N., 11° 18' W. It had travelled eastward at the rate of nearly four miles in twenty-four hours.

Ocean currents are influenced principally by the prevailing wind, which acts upon the surface-layers of water. Configuration of the land, the rotation of the earth, and gravity also have a certain effect upon the result. Neptune's mail is useful, inasmuch as the drifted messengers thereby indicate clearly the set of the sea-surface. Owing to the uncertainty as to the date of recovery, however, the velocity of a current cannot be determined exactly. It may, however, be predicted within reasonable limits that the average drift of a bottle is less the farther the equator is distant. Near the equator one of Neptune's mails travels about fifteen miles per day, whereas in our latitudes it slows down to some six miles in twenty-four hours. Hence it is fairly safe to assume with Lieutenant A. Hautreux, of the French navy, that the onward motion of the waters towards Great Britain and Norway is not continuous, but is dependent in a great measure upon the winds.

SOME LISBON NOTES.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.

For a poor man, without abilities or expectations, Lisbon ought to be a charming residence, always supposing he has a liking for cats, which share the streets with the mendicants. Having an umbrella and about twopence-halfpenny a day, one may here support life with ease. The glorious sunlight, the public gardens with their balmy shade and fresh fountains, the Tagus, and the rich colouring and vivacity of the city might be regarded as a substantial bonus to the gift of mere existence. It is not without reason that Lisbon's beggars are the most devout of persons. Free from responsibilities, they may be seen with thankful countenances on the cool church pavements in the very prime of the morning. Each new day is to them as full of possibilities as were the newly-discovered continents to their adventurous forefathers. Of one thing they are at least certain: they cannot starve. If they chance to be ailing, are there not in all the streets of the city apothecaries' shops inscribed with the comforting words: 'Consultations for the poor gratis'? On the other hand, a spell of exceptional energy may yield in an hour or two the wherewithal for half-a-week's sustenance. A little time is necessary to understand the situation and circumstances of these interesting and picturesque suitors to one's pocket, who plead in succession, hat in hand, in

the cafés, outside them, and anywhere else; but once these are grasped one understands also why Lisbon's beggars are among the most polite and even amiable of her inhabitants.

There can be no cheaper place in Europe than this radiant capital of a languishing, yet far from disreputable, country. Your hotel landlord may stun you with his chatter about thousands of reis; but afterwards, when you pay your bill, you will find that you have been living on the fat of the land (with excellent wine) for a mere three or four shillings a day. To the average unsympathetic tourist it does not matter that Portugal's finances are in a shocking condition—until he realises his own profit thereby. The currency consists of paper and copper. Gold-pieces have been coined, for a courteous neighbour at dinner one day showed me a specimen pendent from his watch-chain; and silver is met with, though not commonly. In the main, one has to traffic with bank-notes worth from about twopence upwards. The result is overburdening to the pockets. But one puts up with it when one perceives precisely what it means. Our glorious pound-pieces and Bank of England notes are in great demand in this debt-encumbered realm—in fact, at a premium of about fifty per cent. For the stranger it is magnificent. And yet it is pitiable. For Portugal is so intellectually torpid that she cannot weigh her predicament and get even with the foreigner by increasing her prices. That is why the foreigner, on the strength of his own nation's staunch credit, lives at Portugal's expense instead of benefiting the country by his expenditure.

Old fashions and new rub shoulders charmingly in Lisbon. The city gets its water by aqueduct, as in the time of the Romans; and very fine is the effect of the aqueduct's arches sprawling across the green and dun valleys in their twenty-two kilometre stride to Cintra. But the latest things in tram and electric cars are also here. The streets are, indeed, rather offensively crowded with these useful vehicles, and their rails do not improve the thoroughfares. Until the other day you were not permitted to leave the country without passport formalities and fees. The same enlightenment which has abolished these nuisances has introduced cycles and even 'foot bol' into Lisbon. The queen has taken to the fashionable wheel, and the youth of the city almost lose their close-cropped heads with excitement in watching a football match of forty minutes' duration. The old peninsular saying that 'a woman should leave home only three times: to be christened, married, and buried,' still meets with a vast deal of local appreciation. Nevertheless, it is the women who seem to do most of the work in the land. Whether seen barelegged in the fields or in the fish-market by the Tagus, their industry is alike encouraging, and, to the stranger, surprising. And though proverbs may deride them, they are assuredly more of a power in the house than are their step-sisters of Spain. I have heard them rate their husbands right manfully, and the latter have clutched their long, pendent whiskers in silence instead of replying. These same whiskers, of the exact Dundreary type, are among the most diverting spectacles in Lisbon

and the provinces. They are much the vogue with middle-aged and elderly men. In one day I have seen them embellishing a duke, a waiter, and a common muleteer with a crimson waistband. The last gentleman wore them with the best grace of all; for there was a high wind at the time, and they swelled out in front of him like a brace of peacocks. And in contrast with these mediæval whiskers are the remarkably involuted moustaches which are even more fashionable with the youth of the city. I can only point to the capital of a pillar of the Ionic order of architecture to give a correct idea of the skill of the Lisbon barbers in this respect. Of costumes there is, of course, as much variety as in the whole of Portugal, for day by day and night by night peasants from Algarve, Beira, and even as far north as Trás-os-Montes come and go by that stately railway-station of the Rocio, in the heart of the city, with its large horseshoe-shaped windows and its fourscore-and-five steps leading from the street-level to the level of its rails.

These steps suggest Lisbon's unevenness. But this is far too mild a word. The streets are in places precipitous, so that the electric cars which traverse them are worked like the cars on the Righi and Pilatus. Again and again in my wanderings I halted on the edge of these abysses, and then retraced my way. I cannot conscientiously say that they turned my head, but I feared the subsequent climb. For the city is built on and between a range of six or seven hills which rise smartly from the river-bank. Think of a switchback stretching about six miles, with only as many undulations and corresponding ascents of a hundred or a hundred and fifty feet, and you have an idea of Lisbon's site. But you must cover the area for a mile or so broad with white houses; blue, red, and yellow houses; churches towered and spired, palaces as well as palatial residences with large enclosed gardens attached, and crown all with the deeply-coloured blue sky, to see Lisbon herself, even in fancy.

Of course such a foundation lends itself excellently for terraces and what may be called (for the sake of euphony and romantic effect) hanging gardens. In these Lisbon excels. They are as a rule admirably planted, watered, and provided with seats as well as fountains. Busts, if not statues, of the great men of all nations also adorn these public places, where cats and men may repose luxuriously in the hottest hours of the day, and in the evening under the stars look down upon Lisbon's phantasmagoria of lights and the lamps of the many ships in the Tagus. There is something almost fantastic in the views from these vantage-points about sunset, when the river turns peacock-blue, and the many elusive tints of the city's houses, one above the other, are brought out with an effect that is well-nigh overwhelming. The word 'opaline' might be applied to this picture for about ten minutes daily. But 'opaline' is not enough. There is a more subtle element in the scene that it beats words to describe, something that makes you doubt if you are still on this familiar old earth, or if you have not suddenly been transported to a planet where the atmosphere is of a purer, more ennobling kind. But you are soon brought back to your bearings. Either it is a very commonplace tabby cat which mews and rubs itself against your shins, or a

plaintive beggar whispering melodiously about the dolour of his circumstances, as he thrusts a printed account of them into your hands and stands reverentially uncovered as to his head. The beggar will, of course, not revile you if you give him nothing, but he will thankfully acknowledge your civility in merely having listened to him, and carry his printed tale to the next person. And meanwhile the especial glory has gone from the gloaming: the stars overhead, though very bright, are unmistakably nothing but stars.

The average Northerner fancies the South European is instinctively cruel to animals. In Lisbon and Portugal generally this fancy is without justification. There is more cruelty to animals in England, in spite of our police vigilance and protective societies. With a fifth as many cats in London in proportion to its size as there are in Lisbon, we should be up in arms against them, and lethal chambers would be the lot of the majority. No one who has not been in Lisbon can imagine how a civilised city can be possessed by these sleek, sagacious quadrupeds. They lie by half-dozens in the streetways, and stalk about serenely, exchanging remarks and buffets with an indifference and trust in humanity that is almost superb. If they bear signs (as many do) of life's wear-and-tear, it may safely be assumed that they owe the tokens to each other, not to Lisbon's amiable and tolerant bipeds. When the French occupied the city, nearly a hundred years ago, they bayoneted the dogs right and left. Since then visitors here have been spared the annoyance of their lean, arched backs and peevishness. The cats are really troublesome only in the night. But the time will certainly come when decrees of rather more than decimation shall be enforced against them also. At present, however, Lisbon loves her cats. Louis Wain would like the picture galleries here, his pets are so obviously the pets of the Portuguese artists as well.

In the little square before the famous church of St Roque (which has a chapel so gorgeous that Napoleon tried to arrange for its removal entire to France) are to be read these words, affixed to a drinking-fountain: 'Without compassion for animals one has not a good heart.' It is the same all over Portugal. This is a land of drinking-fountains, and our four-footed friends are considered quite as much as the men their masters. Lisbon's fountains are supreme centres of animation and interest. Mules, oxen, asses, horses, dogs, and cats all appreciate them; more even, one could suppose, than do the swarthy Gallegos who fill their barrels at them and carry the leaden burdens up and down the steep streets, selling the fluid at a farthing a glass. These Gallegos, or natives of Galicia in Spain, are a curious and inevitable feature of Lisbon and all Portugal's towns. They leave their gorse-clad native rocks and damp, green valleys for Portugal, much as the confectioners and cooks of Italy and Switzerland come to London—hoping that hard work and thrift will anon enable them to return home with a competence. But their portion in the South is not easy. They seem to be despised the more the more they toil. Spain has many proverbs to show her contempt for Portugal: 'Pocos y locos' ('Few and fools') is one of the bitterest of them; but Portugal amply requites the discourtesy with its own saying in contempt

of these Spanish immigrants: 'God first made the Portuguese, and then the Gallegos to wait upon them.'

I have been much entertained in a provincial inn to hear the swelling talk on this subject of a mere fifteen-year-old wine-server. The cook was by chance a Gallego, and the little Portuguese hated him. They are, in short, more cruel to the Gallegos than to their beasts in Portugal. The man who spends an hour greasing and polishing the horns of his yellow oxen would hardly, methinks, waste a minute over a sick Gallego, unless he were his own servant at cheap wages. I hope I wrong him in the imputation, but I fear I do not. Prejudices are adhered to tenaciously in countries like Portugal, which do not provide adequate outlets for the public energy.

Even as the thorough-paced Lisbonensian despises his neighbours and distant relations of Galicia, so, too, he loathes his kindred of Brazil. But the latter have a will of their own, and ability to enforce it. They return to the Portuguese all the ill-feeling and abuse these lavish upon them. And yet Portugal seems to be the Mecca of most rich Brazilians. There are hotels in Lisbon where you meet few guests save these sallow, indolent Transatlantics. They are to be known by their complexions and inertia; also by the very large single-stone diamond rings which decorate, even if they do not adorn, their fingers.

It is impossible to be long in Lisbon, even nowadays, without meditating, vainly enough, about the great earthquake. The city is far more massive now than it was in 1755. The thickness of the granite walls of its churches and houses is laudable from many aspects. But this same substantiality would prove incredibly murderous if the earthquake of 1755 were to repeat itself. Perhaps they do well to have confidence; perhaps they have done amiss. Viewed from the Tagus, Lisbon of 1897 seems to offer tremendous scope for new seismic ruin. How her churches and palaces on the hill-tops and slopes might be overturned upon the houses and palaces between her hills! With anything like the same destructive force as in 1755, Lisbon would now be rendered a scene of almost irredeemable chaos, and the loss of life would, of course, be appalling. But these are, one may hope, mere dreams inspired by the skeleton ribs of the church of the Carmo on one of the city's hill-tops. The earthquake wrecked this church, like so many others, and it is preserved as a ruin.

Some one estimated the loss of property here in the earthquake at £536,300,000. The figures do not seem modest, even when one remembers that Portugal was then a rich country. They include also the solid little sum of £1,000,000, the value of the king's diamonds, which went with one of the royal palaces. These diamonds alone would now be extremely acceptable to Portugal's impoverished exchequer. If ever a city was raised over a sepulchre, modern Lisbon was. But, of course, it is late in the day to be plaintive on the subject, even if it were worth while at any time.

Our British cemetery in Lisbon is one of the loveliest and most suggestive of spots. It has been British ground since 1655. Cromwell, among other stout works, secured this inalienably for us. Its massive cypresses in solemn rows, and the glorious brake of flowers and shrubs all among

its hundreds of tombs (yet without the disorder that proceeds from neglect), with the bees and butterflies sunning themselves between the vivid red of the geraniums and the intense blue of the heavens, all commend this cemetery to the regard of the Briton.

There are many worthy names on its stones, German, Dutch, and Scandinavian, as well as English, for we are hospitable to our fellow-Protestants. Fielding and Doddridge are perhaps our most notable tenants here. Fielding died just a year before the earthquake, which did not, however, disturb our dead. His tomb, erected by subscription, is large and ugly; but it, no doubt, serves its purpose, like the Latin epitaph upon it, which would certainly shock Fielding for its extravagance if he could read it.

The English church adjoins the cemetery. Nothing could be better than its situation and modern design. In this warm land coolness and cleanliness are princely qualities. Our red-and-white church possesses these, and not a little richness of architecture and ornament besides.

Indeed, Lisbon, as a whole, is famously clean. Byron's fearful charge against it, that—

Hut and palace show like filthily;
The dingy denizens are rear'd in dirt,

may have been moderately true in his time; but the words have no application now. Slums, of course, there are, though few, if any, to compare for ignominy with those of our three capital cities. Its many fountains, high and low, keep its sewers flushed hour after hour, all the year round; nor is there much risk from attic windows now, with or without the triple warning of 'Agoa vai!' ('Water's coming!'). It was not always water, either; and never, of course, clean water.

CREAM OF TARTAR.

It is somewhat curious that a substance very largely used in the making of temperance drinks should itself be a by-product in the making of wine; yet such is the fact. Tartaric acid is the acid of grape wine, and it exists in grape juice in combination with potash, forming bitartrate of potash, which is known among men as cream of tartar. The uses of cream of tartar are many and various; it is largely employed by dyers as a mordant, and is in great request for medicinal purposes, for baking powders, and for the manufacture of 'fizzing drinks' and other 'temperance' beverages.

The deposit of the tartrate of potash is the most valuable by-product of winemaking, and the manufacture of cream of tartar and kindred compounds is one of the foremost industries in the wine-districts of France. The cream of tartar of commerce is the product of the purification of the impure tartrates in the 'lees' which the winemaker gathers after the vintage is over. As fermentation proceeds the tartar separates from the 'must,' the greater the acidity of the wine the greater being the yield of tartar, while the stronger the wine is in alcohol the smaller is the percentage of tartar. If the wine is allowed to remain any length of time in the fermenting tank a deposit takes place there; but the principal deposit is in the vats or tanks into which the

first drawing off is made, and if the wine is drawn off warm the deposit is much increased. In tanks lined with cement or glass the deposit on the sides is small, most of the tartar settling on the bottom, where it is mingled with the dregs and other impurities; hence some wine-growers consider that it really pays better to use the less durable, and therefore more costly, wooden vats, on the sides of which the crystals freely form. It is found, too, that the rougher the wood of the vats or casks the richer the deposit of tartar.

When the vats are emptied the crude tartar, technically called argol, is scraped from their interiors. This substance is in colour either a dirty white or a dusky red, according to the wine by which it has been deposited, and it requires much purification. It is now thrown into a large wooden tank which is about half-filled with water, and intersected by steam-pipes by means of which the water is brought to the boiling-point, dissolving the argol. The liquor is then run off into a series of vessels lined with lead, across the tops of which are straps of wood from which slips of lead depend. Crystallisation takes place on these slips, as well as on the leaden sides of the vessels. The cold liquor remaining is drawn off, reboiled, and run into other similar vessels until all the tartar has been deposited. The crystals thus obtained are laid out on shallow trays to dry in the sun, after which they are dissolved and recrystallised until at length the deposit is quite pure and white. Good commercial argol should contain about fifty per cent. of cream of tartar. In France tartar-making, from the very scraping of the casks onwards, is a trade by itself; while in Italy, with the exception of Sicily, all that the winemaker usually does himself is to collect the crude argols from his casks and sell them to an agent for exportation; and the same may be said generally of Spain, large wine-producer as that country is. In recent years, however, tartar-making has become an established industry in Sicily.

LATE LOVE.

LOVE came to me through the gloaming:

The dew on his wings lay wet,
And the voice of his wistful greeting.

Was weary with old regret.
'O heart,' he sighed at my casement,
'Must I wait for a welcome yet?'

He had come with the early roses,
In the golden shining of morn;
But I asked a gift he bestowed not—
A flower that bears no thorn.
So, through the glare of the noontide,
He left me, to toil forlorn.

And now—in life's quiet evening,
When long are the shadows cast—
He comes with the few pale blossoms
He has saved from a hungry past;
And into my heart unquestioned
I take him to rest at last.

M. E. MARTYN.

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MEMORIES OF CHARLES DICKENS.

By MALTUS QUESTELL HOLYOAKE.

MUCH has been written about Charles Dickens, and much more will doubtless be written. The public delight in Dickensiana is not likely to be sated in our time. The slightest personal recollection of him, or discovery of fresh facts respecting the characters he created or the localities he depicted, is always read with universal avidity. Though one of those persons, daily getting less numerous, who remember Dickens in the flesh, my memories of him may not be very vivid or very remarkable; but such as they are, I doubt not that some lover of the dead author will read them with interest.

Some forty years ago, when the immortal writer whose name is now a household word in all countries was witching the world with noble writing, I was a very small boy; but even then Dickens was a much-appreciated novelist with me, and one of the first masters of fiction with whose works I became acquainted. I well remember, in my childhood's days, the issue of *David Copperfield*, in green-covered monthly parts, with two illustrations by 'Phiz' (Hablot K. Browne), price one shilling. The publication of these parts was awaited all over England with interest and impatience. In my own home their appearance was looked for with pleasurable expectancy; for, as a treat, my elder sister used to read to a select auditory, consisting of my mother, my brother, and myself, chapters of poor Doady's adventures. These informal readings took place after tea, and sorry were we when the part was exhausted, and we had to wait for the next instalment. In this way I became acquainted with the magniloquent Micawber, the good-humoured Traddles, the slimy Uriah, the child-wife Dora, the faithful Peggotty, the Royalist Mr Dick, and the rest of the characters of that delightful book, which I have re-read many times, and was reading only the other day with unabated enjoyment.

I am very conscious that such memories of the famous novelist as I have preserved in my mind

must seem 'stale, flat, and unprofitable' reading, after the recent reminiscences of his son, Charles Dickens the younger—now, too, no more; but as some justification of my temerity in penning such few facts as I can recall, I may mention that my earliest recollections were associated with Dickens. At the time of which I write my home was a house overlooking the grounds of Tavistock House, where he resided, and I used frequently to see him walking in those grounds, taking, I imagine, a quiet constitutional when the demands upon his time did not permit of his taking the pedestrian exercise in the direction of Highgate or Hampstead, of which he was so fond. At the end of the garden of our house was a substantial outhouse, used as a play-room by us children. This outhouse was roofed with lead, and the roof being flat, it formed a point of vantage from which I used to watch Dickens's sons (each now of distinction in his own branch of life) playing cricket and other games, with, as often as not, their distinguished father looking on. Both before and since Dickens lived there, Tavistock House possessed other notable residents, and Perry of the *Morning Chronicle*, Frank Stone the Royal Academician, Mr (now Sir) James Stansfeld, Georgina Weldon, and Gounod the composer have at various times been occupants.

As I lived amid literary surroundings, and as my father, George Jacob Holyoake, combined the allied occupations of author, editor, publisher, and lecturer, it is not to be wondered at that as a youth I possessed literary aspirations; and, as is the case with many others, they were about all I did possess at that time. An ardent desire which actuated me to make the fortune of a publication with the discernment to recognise the genius of my pen was not gratified; and although the Thames flows conveniently near Fleet Street, I found that my efforts at authorship did not set that river on fire. They might, however, have assisted to create a fire of some sort in an editorial office; but if so, I knew it not. It was only natural that I should wish to give an editor for whose works I had

such admiration as Dickens the advantage (?) of publishing some of the (in my own estimation) brilliant articles I was then producing. I therefore, being sixteen years of age at the time, sent one of my effusions to *All the Year Round*. It was promptly returned, as no doubt it deserved to be, with one of the usual notes of rejection in the lithographed handwriting of Dickens in the blue ink which he always used. Writers do not as a rule, I believe, trouble to keep the brief and unwelcome editorial intimations that their contributions are 'declined with thanks,' 'unsuitable,' or returned 'owing to want of space,' but I have preserved the communication from *All the Year Round* thirty-five years, and here it is:

OFFICE OF 'ALL THE YEAR ROUND,'

A WEEKLY JOURNAL CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

No. 26 WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND,
LONDON, W.C., April 12th, 1862.

Mr Charles Dickens begs to thank the writer of the paper entitled 'A Reminiscence of the Prince Consort' for having done him the favour to offer it as a contribution to these pages. He much regrets, however, that it is not suited to the requirements of *All the Year Round*.

The manuscript will be returned under cover, if applied for as above.

All the Year Round has long ago been incorporated with *Household Words*, which it superseded on its first appearance on April 30, 1859, after the disagreement Dickens had with his publishers. It was in *All the Year Round* that Dickens's novels *A Tale of Two Cities* and *Great Expectations* first appeared. As most readers of Dickens's works know, the original of Boythorn in *Bleak House* was Walter Savage Landor, the poet; and it is a singular fact that the last contribution of Dickens himself to the publication now absorbed by *Household Words* was an article on the irascible but kind-hearted author of *The Pentameron*.

Another document I possess in Dickens's hand-

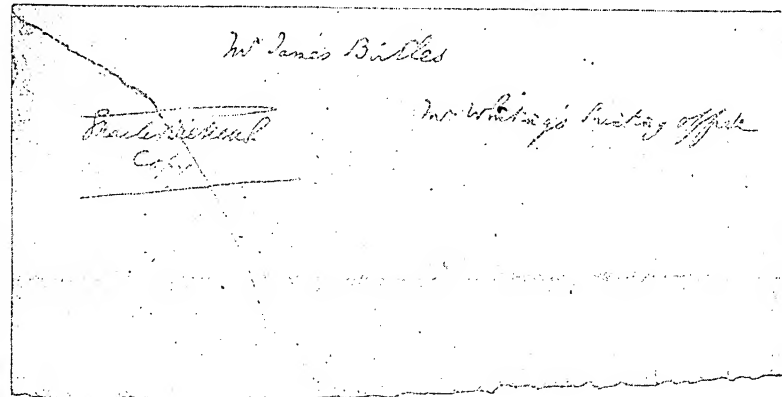
'copy.' 'Copy,' some readers may be unaware, is a printer's term for manuscript.

The eldest son of the novelist, in his recently published recollections of his father, states that in his opinion the strain and excitement consequent on Dickens's public readings in England and America had a distinct effect towards shortening his life. I had the good fortune to hear him read a selection from his works at St James's Hall. One was the story of Little Emily, from *David Copperfield*, and I shall never forget the height of dramatic power to which he rose when describing the death of Steerforth. In my mind's eye I can see him now. He so threw himself into the tragic spirit of the incident (and who should so truly interpret the meaning of a passage, and the real effect intended, as the writer who created it?) that I never wondered to hear that at the conclusion of his reading he was exhausted and almost fainting.

Once, when a boy, I was reading *Bleak House*, after a long illness, and burst into tears when I came to the death of poor Jo, so greatly did Dickens's touching description of the imaginary death of the little crossing-sweeper affect me. A pathetic passage in a book, or a pathetic voice in a play always gives me a cold shiver down the spine, and a choking sensation in the throat even now. If the mere perusal of the creations of Dickens's genius, according as they were grave or gay, could affect the sensibilities of his readers, as I doubt not they have others besides myself, how much more were their emotions aroused when under the spell of the author's unequalled elocutionary powers!

Dickens acted every piece he read, and moved his audience to smiles or tears as his theme was humorous or pathetic. In the murder scene in *Oliver Twist*, where Bill Sikes slays Nancy, Dickens was especially dramatic, and his hearers held their breath, enchained by the horror and intensity of his description. This piece, too, which involved study and both mental and physical strain, affected Dickens's nerves and health. Dickens it must be remembered was

reading all the evening. No actor who impersonates a single character is ever so long and continuously at full tension as was the case with Dickens; and the actor has frequent rests between his appearances on the stage. The present generation cannot realise the intensity with which Dickens, a born actor, gave his wonderful representations. For an author to read his works in public was then a



writing is an old, torn, large-sized blue envelope endorsed 'Charles Dickens Copy,' and addressed to 'Mr James Birtles, Mr Whiting's Printing Office.' It was rescued from Mr Whiting's wastepaper basket by a friend and given to me as a literary relic. I have treasured for many years this torn envelope that once contained Dickens's

novelty; and Dickens's unparalleled success in his new and arduous undertaking created a sensation and excitement that nowadays cannot be adequately comprehended. The influence of his readings, too, was to awaken the better feelings of humanity; and how many seasonable and kindly thoughts and charitable deeds were inspired by

his reading of *A Christmas Carol* alone will never be known. It was a lay sermon that would tend to bring nearer the golden time when

Each man works for all men's good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood.

Another occasion on which I saw Dickens was at a meeting at the Adelphi Theatre in connection with the Royal Dramatic College. Charles Dickens, whose interest in theatrical matters needs no enlarging upon, was in the chair. At that time I was assisting my father at his Fleet Street publishing house, and being so near the Adelphi Theatre, I seized the opportunity of running down to hear what Dickens might have to say. The meeting was held in the afternoon, and it comes back to me after all the long years that have passed, how dull and dingy the theatre looked in the daytime. Dickens, to my disappointment, gave a thoroughly business-like address, unrelieved by brilliancies of thought or touches of Dickensian humour as I had hoped. He, however, made a model chairman, and dealt with several interruptions in a manner which showed intimate acquaintance with the procedure of public assemblies. Edmund Yates, the bean-ideal of a smart young literary 'man about town,' was there. Yates was then writing the 'Flâneur' in the *Morning Star*, a column of club gossip which was the pioneer of the personal paragraph so universal nowadays. He made the best speech of the afternoon, and in speculating upon the prospects of the College anticipated a time when it might possibly have

Prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,
And sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair.

I could not help remarking, in my own mind, how neatly the Tennysonian quotation was introduced, and how cleverly Yates led up to it.

The last time I saw Dickens was in 1863, at the funeral of William Makepeace Thackeray, to which I accompanied my father. Although December, it was as bright and sunny as a summer day. On getting out at the railway station we encountered George Cruikshank, with whom in early life Thackeray had studied etching, and whose illustrations were a feature of Dickens's earlier works. Cruikshank was then in his seventieth year. He walked with us to Kensal Green Cemetery, and the day being warm I carried his overcoat. The great temperance artist was as quaint and odd in manner and appearance as any of his own caricatures. 'George,' as his intimates called him, possessed histrionic tastes, and used to appear as Macbeth and in other Shakespearian characters at Sadler's Wells. He was associated with Dickens, too, in the amateur performances in connection with the promotion of the Guild of Literature and Art. Cruikshank was also a volunteer officer, and, on the occasion of some review, a comic bard wrote, in allusion to his temperance proclivities, lines which I still recall:

Fancy Cruikshank, if you please,
On a horse with groggy knees!

At Kensal Green Cemetery we found Mr Moncreu D. Conway, then newly arrived in England, with whom I had already the pleasure of being acquainted. The biographer of Thomas

Paine was then and until recently the minister of South Place Chapel, Finsbury—a worthy successor of W. J. Fox, M.P., Unitarian preacher, Anti-Corn-law agitator, and one of the founders of the *Westminster Review*. Another mourner at the graveside to whom my father introduced me was Louis Blanc, the French Republican, then in exile. I regarded with respect and attention the politician whose writings created the Revolution of 1848. Louis Blanc possessed an intellect as great as his form was diminutive, and was eminently one to

Be measured by his soul;
The mind's the standard of the man.

He was very sensitive of his small stature, which had exposed him on more than one occasion to the painful ridicule of the feeble-minded. It is related by a biographer of forty years ago, that at the outset of his public life he embraced the diplomatic profession, and having been appointed secretary to his cousin, he first attended one of the parties of the famous Duchesse de Dino. Reports of his attainments and ambitions had preceded him, and his appearance was awaited with interest. He was presented by his uncle, the celebrated Pozzo di Borgo; and on the announcement of the well-known name, all eyes were directed to the uncle, whose portly form concealed the dwarfish dimensions of his nephew. Arrived at the head of the room, the veteran Ambassador said to the Duchess, 'Permit me to introduce to your notice my nephew.' The lady raised herself with a languid air from the sofa, and exclaimed in a tone of sweet bewilderment, 'Where is he? I should be delighted to see him.' That evening Louis Blanc resigned the post which had been obtained for him with much difficulty by his uncle. The result of his unfortunate reception may be traced in every line of his work, *The History of Ten Years*, which Louis-Philippe was often heard to declare acted as a battering-ram against the bulwarks of loyalty in France. At another time, in England, it is reported that Blanc was driven into a state of almost madness by a lady in whose country-house he was detained by stress of weather, asking him if he would mind sleeping in the child's bed. In 1839 Blanc was attacked one night in the streets of Paris and repeatedly stabbed by an unknown assailant. He was left for dead. His attempted assassination was an act of vengeance for a political article he had written. Louis Blanc had a twin-brother who was at that time in Spain, and who felt strange pains, as if from blows, in the same part of his body, and at the same moment, as his brother in Paris was wounded. Before information reached him, he had already written to know if any misfortune had occurred. The elder Dumas founded his play *The Corsican Brothers* on this incident. On the establishment of the French Republic, Louis Blanc returned to the country he had served, and suffered for, and for many years before his death enjoyed the honour to which he was entitled.

Grouped round the grave of Thackeray were many names distinguished in literature, art, or the drama. Anthony Trollope, the novelist; Mark Lemon, then editor of *Punch*; George Henry Lewes, philosopher and critic; Sir Theodore

Martin; Isaac Butt, the predecessor of Parnell; Sir W. H. Russell, the *Times* war correspondent; Sir John Millais; Shirley Brooks, afterwards Lemon's successor in the *Punch* editorship; Miss Braddon, who had but recently disclosed *Lady Audley's Secret*; Charles Mathews, the actor; Henry Cole, C.B., of the first exhibition fame; Tom Taylor, afterwards the successor of Brooks in the *Punch* editorship; John Hollingshead, not then, I fancy, flickering round 'the sacred lamp of burlesque'; Creswick, the Royal Academician; Robert Browning; and many others, of more or less celebrity, were there. Charles Dickens stood beside Browning, and many besides myself gazed with interest at the keen-looking, handsome, starry-eyed writer. Dickens was not in mourning, and was wearing trousers of a check pattern, a waistcoat of some coloured plaid, and an open frock-coat. He seemed larger in stature and more robust than I had ever before noticed him. Most of those whose names are mentioned as assembled to pay the last tribute to Thackeray are now dead, and seven years later Dickens himself was no more: 'All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.'

Writing at the time to Wilkie Collins, Dickens thus expressed himself regarding the death of his fellow-novelist:

'You will have heard about poor Thackeray's death—sudden and yet not sudden—for he had been alarmingly ill; at the solicitation of Mr Smith and some of his friends, I have done what I would have most gladly excused myself from doing if I felt I could, and have written a couple of pages about him in what was his own magazine. Therein I have tried, so far as I could with his mother and children before me, to avoid the fulsome and injudicious hash that has been written about him in the papers, and delicately to suggest the true points in his character as a literary man. Happily, I suppose, you can have no idea of the vile stuff that has been written; the writers particularly dwelling on his being "a gentleman," "a great gentleman," and the like, as if the rest of us were of the tinkler tribe.'

The original of this letter was recently sold at Sotheby's for fifty pounds.

In *Bleak House* Charles Dickens called attention to Chancery cases dragging their slow length along, and *Jarndyce v. Jarndyce* is doubtless entitled to the credit of lessening some of the law's delays. *Oliver Twist*, too, contained a vigorous attack on the shortcomings of the poor-laws, which have since been much amended. In another of his works, Dickens's description of the world-famed Circumlocution Office had a good effect on the red-tapeism of government departments. It is a wonder his powerful pen was never tempted to ridicule the laws affecting the press, seeing that he was a victim to them; for it is a fact, forgotten by many and never known by others, that at the time of the agitation for the repeal of the Newspaper Stamp Duty, proceedings were taken by the Inland Revenue authorities against Dickens for issuing the *Household Narrative of Current Events* unstamped, it being a publication 'containing news to be dispersed, and made public,' to use the phraseology of the long-dormant act of parliament entitled the Tenth of Queen Anne. It was known that Queen Anne was dead, and everybody thought

the act was too; but it was not so. A great statesman held that nothing so soon secures the repeal of unjust laws as their stringent execution. It was with this object in view that the Committee for the Repeal of the Taxes on Knowledge, in their zeal for the cause of a free press, instigated the authorities to prosecute the great novelist. In doing this, however, they undoubtedly did Dickens a bad turn, as the publication of the *Household Narrative* was suspended at a loss to him of, it was believed, £4000 a year. My father, who gives an account of the matter in the chapter of his *Autobiography* entitled 'The Trouble with Queen Anne,' mentions that when the Dickens trial came on, the cry in the newspaper offices was—'What the Dickens is news?'—a very obvious, but not remarkable witticism.

Dickens, like his great contemporary Thackeray, and the late Robert Louis Stevenson, was struck down in the midst of uncompleted work. The kindly satirist left *Denis Duval*, and the invalid exile of Samoa, *Weir of Hermiston* and *St Ives*, as fragmentary memorials of undiminished powers. It is well-known, however, that the last novel of Dickens, the unfinished *Mystery of Edwin Drood*, was not by any means equal to his other works; indeed, his friend Wilkie Collins in a pencil note to his copy of Forster's *Life of Dickens*, described it, though with all sympathy, as 'the melancholy work of a worn-out brain.' The impending breakdown of the health and constitution of the bright, energetic, and genial writer was of course unknown to either his friends or the public, who regarded what had already appeared of *Edwin Drood* as a failure. Indeed, in one of the humorous periodicals appeared an imitation of it in Dickensesque language, in which a nocturnal visitor is imagined, as penetrating into Dickens's sanctum, where he is busy writing, and beseeching the author to reveal to him (for certain reasons, which I forget) the mystery in which all the world is interested.

'Tell me what really is the mystery of *Edwin Drood*?' urges the inquisitive intruder. At last, yielding to long-continued importunity, Dickens replies in low and sepulchral tones:

'The mystery is how it sells.'

This anecdote sufficiently indicates that the adverse opinion of the critics must have been very strong to have found reflective expression in a comic journal.

John Forster, the biographer of Dickens, considered him 'the most popular novelist of the century,' a verdict endorsed by Wilkie Collins, with the proviso—'after Sir Walter Scott.' It is, however, the fashion of certain writers nowadays to disparage Dickens's works; but such comments would have little effect on those who have read his books. There are writers who claim to be authorities on literature, who, so to speak, put Dickens on to a pair of intellectual scales, and adjudge accurately to their own satisfaction his fictional merits or demerits, and define his exact position among literary luminaries. Without pretending to literary infallibility myself, it has always seemed to me that Dickens is so popular with the people, because he wrote of the people. Most of his scenes and characters were those of ordinary every-day life, and would be thus interesting to ordinary every-day people. We like to read of things familiar to us, just as we hail

with pleasure the reproduction of some well-known spot as a scene in a drama. It is true that the characters of Dickens are pen caricatures, accentuating the characteristics that he wished to portray; but his incidents are natural, and such as might be expected to occur, and he strikes chords which we all recognise. Dickens represents the domestic virtues, the home scenes appealing to every one. President Lincoln said that God loved the common people, and that is why he made so many of them. Dickens also loved the common people, and that is why he wrote for them. Readers fond of a rattling tale of life on the ocean wave by a sailor would choose Marryat; admirers of backwoods and prairie adventure would prefer Mayne Reid; lovers of cultured and intellectual romance may perhaps select Bulwer Lytton; those in search of rollicking Irish fun put their faith in Charles Lever or Samuel Lover; whilst for playful and tender satire Thackeray is sought. But for life as we know it, thoughts that we think, and homely experiences common to us all, Dickens is paramount.

A NIGHT IN AUSTIN FRIARS.

CHAPTER II.—AT THE BRINK.

THE door opened, and *she*—the girl who had turned the key upon him in Austin Friars—stood there.

'Miss Warrener?'

It was Miss Warrener; there could be no shadow of doubt, for the manager's letter was open in her hand. But a still greater surprise was in store for Ringham that morning. No sooner had she greeted him, more cordially than he as a stranger had reason to expect, than the girl hastened to inquire:

'You have seen Mr Grinold?'

'No.'

'Why not?' and her voice expressed vexation. 'He was looking for you every hour of yesterday. He is an old man, feeble in health, and he cannot bear the suspense. Will you go to him now?'

'I am afraid,' said Ringham, 'that it's out of the question. It was Mr Warrener's wish'—

'My father? He knows nothing,' said the girl, 'absolutely nothing, about the business which has brought you to England. Nobody does, except Mr Grinold and myself.'

'Nobody except this girl!' Ringham thought. The situation was becoming each moment more puzzling. Should he confide all his trouble to her? It suggested itself favourably to his mind. Meanwhile the task which had been imposed upon him, the task of breaking the news of Anthony Grinold's death, took an exaggerated shape in his brain. He tried to lead up to a contemplation of the bereavement suggestively:

'There was a block on the line—you know what a foggy day it was—and, therefore, how was it possible to reach Mr Grinold yesterday? And now, this morning—as I learn from Mr Warrener—he is so seriously indisposed'—

'Mr Grinold ill—seriously ill?' and while speaking she moved towards the door. 'I will go to him at once, and'—

'No! I entreat you,' Ringham interposed, 'don't go. You—you can do no good—now.'

She glanced round, her look stricken with dread. 'Can you mean—is it possible—too late?'

Ringham made no answer, but he bent his head as a tacit token to her that she had surmised the truth.

Helen Warrener stood near the window, staring blankly before her. Her lips trembled; her beautiful dark eyes had filled with tears. Ringham watched her grief unobtrusively, moved by a sense of wonderment and admiration. What mysterious link of sympathy had held this young girl in such close communion with the old financier of Austin Friars?

Presently, seeming almost to divine his thoughts, she turned to him and said:

'You didn't know him, did you, Mr Ringham?'

'I never even heard his name till this letter'—and he touched his breast-pocket—'a letter of introduction, was given me to Mr Grinold.'

'He was in a fever of impatience to get the securities into his own hands; and when he peered out upon the foggy weather—when he learnt that the mail-train might not reach London until after banking hours—he had a presentiment that— Why, Mr Ringham,' she suddenly broke off, 'how perplexed you look! Does it surprise you that I should know more about Mr Grinold than my father—than any one? It will surprise you still further to learn how I came to make his acquaintance. It was in a top room in Austin Friars.'

'In Austin Friars?'

'Yes; three or four years ago. Does it interest you? To me it proved quite a weird experience. I cannot tell you everything, though perhaps I may do so another day; but I can tell you how the meeting between Mr Grinold and myself came about. Should you like to know?'

Ringham willingly assented. A top room in Austin Friars! He could hardly restrain the impulse to question her. Was it the garret in which he had lodged—the chance was not remote—in which he had been robbed? He would speak presently, when she had spoken. He would relate his own experience in a top room in Austin Friars, and with a full sense of trust in her generosity to give credence to his story. Meanwhile—

'It happened when I was barely seventeen,' said Helen; 'and I had got tired of waiting in the office for my father. He was busy over the books; and it was such dreary work sitting on a stool watching the leaves of his ledger flying to and fro as though caught in a high wind. It was monotonous; and so, while he was absorbed in his work, I slid off my stool and crept upstairs.'

She little thought how easily Ringham followed her as she went, step by step. The whole scene,—by the light of flickering matches—instantly recurred.

'I wandered from room to room,' she went on, 'until I came to a back attic on the top floor that took my fancy. There was a big, cosy armchair in this room; and after my tiring expedition—I had never ventured upstairs before—I sat down to rest. It was such a sultry summer's afternoon—the house was so silent—and I fell asleep.'

He could see her there—it was assuredly the garret in which he had slept—in the great chair, with her lovely brown head resting upon one of the arms. And then—

'When I woke it was night. Mr Grinold came in with a light and found me there. He had never heard of my existence before, though my father had been in his employment for ever so many years. From that night Mr Grinold and I were the best of friends. He constantly invited me to his house. Upon the first day I went to see him he discovered that I had a head for business, and as a proof that he was in earnest, began to consult me seriously about his affairs. One day, not many weeks ago, he told me, in the strictest confidence, that he had worked out a scheme by which he calculated to double his fortune at a single stroke. It was a scheme for investing his whole capital in foreign bonds.'

'Not everything?' said Ringham in consternation.

'His whole fortune,' the girl affirmed. 'He even went so far as to mortgage the house in Austin Friars. But he kept everybody in ignorance of his speculation. My father would have opposed him; and Mr Shuttleworth, his lawyer, would have considered him insane. But Mr Grinold had a master-mind for finance, and could dispense with other people's advice. He seized the chance offered him, as you know, by your bank in Cairo. His capital was doubled. These foreign bonds, when realised, will show the estate to be worth thirty thousand pounds. Isn't that about the figure?'

While she still spoke Ringham was bracing himself to tell her everything. It seemed to him that Anthony Grinold would have urged him strenuously—was urging him in the spirit—to pursue this course. By a frank avowal might he not win an ally? The lawyer Shuttleworth—her father too—would doubtless regard his story of a night in Austin Friars with suspicion; and it would perhaps be in Helen Warrener's power to direct and aid him. One word from her might save him from stumbling blindly into entanglements; for if any doubt were thrown upon his word he might have reason to view the future with grave concern. But, as fate would have it, he was debarred from putting this worthy resolve into force. There was a rattling of the latchkey in the front-door, a footstep in the hall, and next moment Helen's father came in.

'I've not seen Shuttleworth yet,' he said, answering Ringham's inquiring look. 'But I've had a note from him. He's coming round as soon as he can get away. I told you what a busy man he was. There's no knowing when he'll turn up.'

Ringham craved to be alone. He knew that no further talk with Helen Warrener—no reference to the stolen bonds—would now be possible. He would be compelled to act independently. No time must be lost in writing to the bank in Cairo. His version of the disaster should be despatched to-night; his record of the garret mystery in Austin Friars; and then Shuttleworth would have to be faced. He pleaded a business engagement, and hastened to take his leave; though with the distinct understanding that he should be sent for at the 'Two Swans,' the moment the lawyer made his appearance.

The letter to Cairo was completed; nothing had been kept back; and Ringham now paced to and fro in his room at the 'Two Swans,' each minute expecting the summons to Charterhouse Square. His courage began to waver. What would Helen

Warrener have thought after all? Mr Grinold's whole fortune gone! How could he hope to be believed? He stopped before his window and looked out upon the great, noisy thoroughfare. The street lamps were being lighted already; another fog-ridden, wintry night was closing around the crowded city. He pressed his hand to his heated forehead. What was there to hinder him from flight? It would not take him two minutes to pack his valise; his coat was hanging temptingly over the back of a chair. His look was desperate; his brain throbbed loudly, 'Flight—flight!' He heard it in the roar of traffic without, in voices raised to shrill cries and maddening shouts, in the scurrying tramp of human life that hurried by. He stood at the brink; one step and the tide would carry him onward—beyond recall.

Meanwhile John Warrener, seated in his little back parlour beside the hearth, had the appearance of a man resolved to take his troubles easily.

'Well, Helen!' said he, 'I don't know what will become of us; our only support is removed. Who's likely to prop me up at my time of life?'

'Perhaps Mr Shuttleworth——' Helen began.

'Not he! Shuttleworth knows I've fallen into lazy habits of late. And not to be wondered at either! Lazy habits? Why, there's been no business doing in Mr Grinold's office for many a day. He dismissed all his clerks, as you know, a while back. It's surprising he didn't turn me adrift. He had a tidy fortune at one time,' said the ex-manager retrospectively; 'but I don't know what became of it! Lost it all, maybe; there's no saying.'

Helen made no answer. It was not for her to instruct her father about Mr Grinold's affairs. Mr Shuttleworth would presently be here, and then, when Mr Ringham had stepped over from the 'Two Swans,' every detail would doubtless be discussed. She was in no mood to touch upon the matter now.

The subject which gave her most anxiety—more than she would have cared to admit—had reference to her father's prospects. His affairs were in a serious plight. He had worked for Mr Grinold, ever since the financier had retired from active business, at a reduced salary. They had got into money troubles in consequence; and as a matter of fact, Mr Shuttleworth, being taken into their confidence, had more than once helped them out of their difficulties. And Helen now recognised, with a sense of growing despair, that the problem with regard to repayment of that debt was one that might never be solved; and, what made the thought of their liability still more uninviting, Mr Shuttleworth had lately shown her marked attention. She was brooding over these matters—her father having fallen into a doze—when there came a knock at the front-door. John Warrener looked up blinkingly. 'It's Shuttleworth. Will you go to him, Helen? I'll just collect my thoughts, and join you in two seconds. I've been dreaming about Mr Grinold's money, I do believe!'

Ralph Shuttleworth was standing upon the hearth-rug, warming his hands over the fire in the drawing-room, where the lamp had been lighted and the curtains drawn. He was a well-built, handsome bachelor of eight-and-thirty; with a keen-featured, close-shaven face. His

hands were long and delicate, and persistently expressed to Helen a grasping nature. She was vexed with herself for harbouring this fancy, for she had never had cause to regard the lawyer otherwise than as a frank-natured and generous friend. No woman was more quick to discover good qualities in others; and when discovered, as in Shuttleworth's case, she was ever ready to shut her eyes to a real or imagined blemish. To-night his look was unwontingly sedate, as became the occasion; and he ventured to retain her hand in his own while uttering words of sympathy and condolence.

'I have lost a friend,' said Helen simply—'a true friend.'

'A truer friend, Miss Warrener,' said Shuttleworth, 'than you, perhaps, fully realise yet.' Then he added, with a sudden change in his tone: 'Is the man from Cairo here? I have been given to understand that some one with a letter to Mr Grinold was asking for me.'

'Yes; a gentleman named Ringham. He's to be found at the "Two Swans." I'll send over at once,' said Helen, 'and let him know;' and she moved towards the bell.

'Stay!' said Shuttleworth, arresting her hand. 'I'll step across to the inn myself presently. Mr Ringham is in no particular hurry, I suppose? Pray sit down;' and he placed a chair for her near the table. 'There's a little business I should like to mention— Ah!' he broke off as Helen's father came in, 'will you sit here, Mr Warrener? It's a matter that concerns you both.'

He took a chair at the head of the table, and glanced from one to the other, seated on either side of him. He treated them as he would have treated a couple of clients in his own private office in Finsbury Circus hard by. He had of a sudden become every inch the lawyer.

'We have been appointed executors—you and I—and he glanced at Warrener—'under Mr Grinold's will. We'll go into details when letters of administration have been taken out. Meantime it will gratify you to learn, sir, that you have not been overlooked. Mr Grinold has bequeathed to you the sum of two hundred pounds.'

'I'm glad to hear it;' and he nodded at the lawyer. 'It will help me to pay my debts.'

Shuttleworth waved the sentiment aside. 'There is a will among Mr Grinold's deeds,' he resumed, referring to a note-book in his hand, 'leaving all his property to a relation in New Zealand. But a subsequent will, drafted about the time Mr Grinold became acquainted with your daughter, has made the former legacy null and void.'

Helen's eyes, as well as her father's, were fixed intently upon the lawyer's face.

'In a word,' Shuttleworth concluded, 'by the last will and testament of the late Anthony Grinold, your daughter, Helen Warrener, has been appointed sole residuary legatee. May I be the first to congratulate her?'

'My daughter? What does it all mean?'

'It means,' said Shuttleworth, 'that Miss Warrener has come into a handsome fortune, invested in foreign bonds.'

'A handsome fortune?' said Warrener, with a dazed, inquiring look.

'Thirty thousand pounds,' was Shuttleworth's reply.

At this moment they both turned their eyes curiously towards Helen. She stood at the window, holding back the curtain with an eager hand, and peered out into the fog.

THE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION OF WOMEN.

WE are quite accustomed at the present day to see our young ladies on their way to college; we hear of Girton and Newnham, and of many other institutions for the university education of the gentler sex, and we have women entering many of our learned professions which until recently were dominated by man alone. It would be an interesting study, as well as a readable bit of modern history were it fully written, to trace the rise and progress of the movement which has led to all this. For even a passing inquiry into facts shows that the cause of higher education for women has passed through many struggles, has overthrown many prejudices, and has finally triumphed—if not as yet completely, at least gloriously.

We may now look upon women as on the same footing with men in regard to educational advantages. True, Cambridge and Oxford do not grant their degrees to women, but the examinations are open to them, and so the real educative end is served. But time was when it was popularly believed that to educate woman was to destroy her charm and peculiar adaptability to domesticity. Much of the dislike to her higher education arose from the old notion, inherited from a semi-barbarous past, that her chief function was to minister to the comforts of the male sex more than to its refinement and culture. The education she received was scarcely worth the name. Even when it did approach more reasonable limits, it was very unsystematic and indefinite. At school she got a smattering in everything and a finishing in nothing. 'It was not for her to inquire into the questions which men investigate,' and so her education was merely a fair elementary grounding varnished over with a bright and showy list of 'accomplishments'—so called.

It may seem somewhat superfluous nowadays to unfold and answer any objections which have been offered to the movement. Yet even now we find alive the idea that education leads woman to step out of her own proper sphere, and unfits her for the discharge of those duties which are peculiarly her own. Some even claim that the education of girls will injure the health of the coming race, and make the women of the future less attractive and less womanly. On the other hand, it is agreed that education makes woman more womanly in the truest sense, for it tends to develop what is best in her. The best wives and mothers are those who are the most cultivated. In short, education does not change the fundamental nature; it merely refines and ennobles it. Doubtless a comparatively uneducated woman may be exceedingly pleasant and sociably important if she has force of character and charm of natural manner, while an educated one may be socially a failure. But these are the exceptions.

We must also consider that the elementary education given to girls thirty years ago was a

quite insufficient groundwork on which to build a more substantial structure. It lacked system and thoroughness; if a girl pursued higher education she had simply to go over the rudiments and foundation work again. The great advancement made in the administration of our elementary education has, however, changed all this. Our primary schools have improved by leaps and bounds, and high schools for girls—which we may regard as preparatory institutions for a university education—have sprung up everywhere, and are conducted on sound and systematic principles. The recognition of secondary education by the Education Department has indeed done much.

When the necessity for the better education of women was in great part conceded a new question was raised, and is still keenly disputed by many. 'Should boys and girls be taught conjointly or separately?' we often hear asked. Some object to mixed classes; others claim that they are the most economical and the most efficient. The stimulus given by equal competition between the sexes, and the refining influence of the gentler over the sterner, are no doubt highly beneficial. The experiment of mixed classes, so far as it has been tried in this country, on the Continent, and in America, has been a most complete success. It seems to be pretty generally agreed that the education may be most advantageously carried on in mixed classes until a certain stage is reached. Then each sex may branch into that special line which is most to its advantage. Boys are intended to go into various professions into which it is undesirable that girls should enter, and there are also professions in which ladies are acknowledged to accomplish better work than men.

In 1864 a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the cause of secondary education. Their report led to the adoption of the Endowed Schools Act of 1869, but the work of the Commission was also specially interesting on account of the evidence taken regarding the secondary education of girls. Their report was published in 1868, and was followed by the formation of 'The National Union for Improving the Education of Women,' under the presidency of the Princess Louise. In 1872 this union founded the Girls' Public Day School Company, which soon raised the standard of girls' education throughout the land, and prepared the way for university and college training. This company, together with the Church Day Schools Company, has now sixty-four schools and over ten thousand pupils. All the teachers are women, many of them with a college education. Twenty years ago the National Union founded the Teachers' Training and Registration Society. Directly from this society sprang the Maria Grey Training College, Brondesbury, and indirectly the Cambridge Training College for Women and the St George's Training College, Edinburgh. As far back as 1868 we find in Edinburgh an Association for the University Education of Women; Girton College was founded at Hitchin in 1870, and removed to Cambridge three years later; Newnham College was opened in 1875. In 1877 Glasgow University made considerable efforts to forward the movement, and six years later the Queen Margaret College for Women was the result. In 1877, also, St Andrews University started its L.L.A. degree

scheme; and a year later London University, after trying the experiment of having special examinations for women, threw its degrees open to them. Somerville College and Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, were both opened in 1879. Such, in brief, were the advances made during the first ten years following directly upon the report of the Royal Commission of 1864. The past twenty years have been of marked progress and improvement.

At Cambridge the tripos, or honours examinations for the B.A. degree—in mathematics, classics, natural science, moral science, mediæval and modern languages, Semitic languages, Indian languages, history, and theology—have been open to women since 1881. Certificates are granted by the university to all who obtain a first, second, or third class. Candidates must have been in residence at either Girton or Newnham for a specified period, or within the precincts of the university under the regulations of one or other of the colleges, and must have obtained a pass in the Previous Examination ('Little Go') or must possess its equivalent.

Girton College has about one hundred and fifteen students, with seven resident women lecturers; but students can, if they wish, attend the university lectures in Cambridge in addition to those provided by their college. The fees amount to £105 per annum, and this includes both university and college charges. Entrance and scholarship examinations are held in London in the months of March and June. At Newnham College there are one hundred and fifty-eight students and twelve resident lecturers. An entrance examination is held annually in March at Cambridge, the subjects being mathematics and languages, while many scholarships and exhibitions are awarded every year on the results of the tripos examinations. Fees, inclusive of board, lodging, and teaching, range from £25 to £32 per term, and no student is allowed, without special permission, to be in residence more than two years unless she has a reasonable prospect of success. Out-students—a most important feature—are admitted by the Council if they reside with their parents or guardians in Cambridge, or if they are over thirty years of age and unable to afford the cost of residence at one of the Halls. Fees for out-students are £9 per term.

At Oxford the principal final honours examinations—in classics, natural science, mathematics, theology, jurisprudence, Oriental languages, for the degree of B.C.L. and for the music degrees—are open to women. Somerville College has about seventy students and four resident tutors. There is no entrance examination, but students are expected to pass Responsions or its equivalent before commencing study. Fees for board, lodging, and teaching vary from £86 to £92 per annum, according to rooms selected. Lady Margaret Hall is conducted on the principles of the Church of England, but special provision is made for the liberty of members of other religious bodies. It has accommodation for about sixty students. Candidates for entrance, if they have not passed Responsions, are required to undergo a test in two foreign languages and in elementary mathematics. The charges may be taken as similar to those made at Somerville College. St Hugh's Hall was founded in 1886,

and intended for students unable to bear the expense of residence at Lady Margaret's Hall. It has about twenty-five students, and the inclusive fees run from £45 to £65 a year. Oxford goes even further, however, for there is a hall of residence, St Hilda's, for those who desire a final year or more of study before entering upon any professional career. All such students must be hard workers, but they are not required to go up to any examinations unless they wish to do so.

We may now turn to London, which has many colleges although it possesses no teaching university. The Royal Holloway College, Egham, was opened in 1887, and provides the instruction necessary for the London degrees in arts and science, for the preliminary M.B., for the examinations of Oxford, and for the Royal University of Ireland, the degrees of which are open to women. An entrance examination is held in September, and a scholarship competition takes place annually in July. All scholars—of whom there are nearly one hundred—must study for honours. The inclusive fees amount to £90 per annum. Eight resident women lecturers and ten non-resident professors and teachers make up the teaching staff. The fees for board and residence at Bedford College are £58 to £68 per annum, while tuition fees for the London examinations are £27 to £44 per session. This institution offers scholarships to both resident and non-resident students, and prepares them for the arts and science degrees, and has special classes in chemistry for the first M.B. examination. An art school is attached to the college, as well as a Teachers' Training Department, and in session 1895-96 a complete and scientific course of instruction in Hygiene was instituted to enable women to qualify for the various professional posts in Hygiene now open to them. Westfield College, Hampstead, was founded in 1882, and receives about forty students in preparation for London degrees. Students are not compelled to take the entire course, nor to enter any of the university examinations, although they are required to pass an entrance test in Scripture, English, arithmetic, geography, and two extra subjects. The fees here amount to £105 per annum. Both King's College and Queen's College possess special departments for ladies, and residence, under collegiate rules, is provided at College Hall, Byng Place, Golden Square.

Victoria University follows the example of London in the conferring of its degrees. Houses of residence for lady students in Manchester, Leeds, and Liverpool are recommended by the authorities in connection with the men's colleges. The provincial colleges at Birmingham, Bristol, and Nottingham also provide instruction for women; while Durham University, by a supplemental charter in 1895, was enabled to throw open to them all its degrees except only in Divinity. Thus ladies may enter the Durham College of Science at Newcastle-on-Tyne for instruction in science, medicine, or engineering. Convenient residence, with board, is provided at a cost of from £30 to £40 per session at Eslington Tower. The same cost applies to residence at Aberdare Hall, Cardiff, which was incorporated in 1893. Students here attend lectures in arts, science, or medicine at University College. The University College, Bangor, prepares women for

the London and Welsh degrees, and for the medical preliminary of Edinburgh and Glasgow. In connection with the college is a hall of residence, and a new hostel is being built to accommodate fifty students. At University College, Aberystwith, accommodation is provided for one hundred and forty students, and a very considerable addition is in contemplation.

By the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, it was ordained that it was 'in the power of the University Court of each university to admit women to graduation in such faculty or faculties as the said Court may think fit,' and that 'it shall be competent to the University Court to make provision within the university for the instruction of women . . . either by admitting them to the ordinary classes or by instituting separate classes for their instruction.' The result of this is that the classes and degrees in arts, science, and medicine in all our Scottish universities are open to women; Edinburgh alone has a faculty of music, and grants degrees in that science. At Edinburgh the Crudellius University Hall provides accommodation for women students at the university; doubtless it is the first step towards a university hall of residence. Queen Margaret College, Glasgow, was, soon after the passing of the act above mentioned, incorporated with the university, and so may be now regarded as part of the university buildings. The Queen Margaret Hall provides residence for such students as desire it; the fees for board and lodging run from £32 to £40 per annum. This college has £23,395 of endowment funds, so that it is amply provided with bursaries; while a gift of £5000 recently enabled the university authorities to erect a large new building for the anatomical department. Clinical work for medical students is done at the Royal Infirmary and other local hospitals. St Andrews University opened in 1896 a hall of residence for its women students. It has accommodation for twenty students, the fees for board and residence ranging from £35 to £50. This university has always had the advancement of the higher education of women at heart, and more than nine hundred students present themselves annually for examination in one or more subjects of the L.L.A., while more than sixteen hundred ladies have obtained the degree since 1877, the yearly number of graduations being now over one hundred. The bursaries at St Andrews given to women exclusively are both numerous and valuable. Aberdeen is at present content with opening its bursaries, classes, and degrees to both sexes alike, and girls, in large and increasing numbers, are taking advantage of the privilege thus accorded them.

In conclusion, it may be useful to state that, for the special study of medicine, women are eligible for the medical degrees of London University; the Royal University of Ireland; the conjoint examination of the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland; the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, Edinburgh; the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow; the University of Durham; the Society of Apothecaries, London; and the Welsh Colleges at Cardiff and Aberystwith. In all cases ample provision is made for the necessary hospital work. It must be noted that, by the regulations of the General Medical Council of the United

Kingdom, a body altogether distinct from any college or university, the name of every medical student must, within fifteen days from the date of commencing medical study, be entered on the 'Official Register of Medical Students' kept by the Council. Before such registration can take place the student is required to pass an examination in general knowledge. The subjects embraced are English, Latin, mathematics (arithmetic, algebra to simple equations and Euclid to book iii.), and Greek, or a modern language, or Logic. The Council holds no examination of its own, but accepts the ordinary preliminaries of the universities. By the new regulations a student must be registered as such for five years before being 'admitted' by the Council. Without this admission the practice of medicine or surgery is punishable by law, this precaution being necessary to keep unqualified persons out of the field.

THE DOOM OF THE AIR-GOD.

My acquaintance with Doxley Seymour—a casual acquaintance, cultivated during a month's idle tossing on the broad waters of the Atlantic in the staunch brig *Pocahontas*—bade fair, I would fain believe, to ripen into a lifelong friendship. Gazing back through the long shadowy avenue of life's wanderings, I cannot descry any face that greets me so kindly, any face at once so honest and cheery and heartily friendly, as that of this young Englishman of twenty-seven, ten years my junior, who grasped my hand for the first time when I boarded the *Pocahontas* in Kingston harbour in the fair island of Jamaica. There were many points of sympathy between us; many tastes and habits we shared together; many similarities of fortune in our comparative friendliness, in the long exile which had separated us both from home and family; many bonds of common interest and fellow-feeling, which each succeeding day's intercourse served to strengthen and make firmer. But it was my fellow-traveller's intrinsic character, his almost boyish frankness and enthusiasm, his constant good-humour and geniality, which seemed destined to warm a month's pleasant companionship into a lifelong regard. How that seeming destiny was interrupted, how that intimacy came to be a mere tender memory, this story shall tell.

Having embarked at Vera Cruz—at that time the only passenger by the trading-brig—Doxley Seymour had already made himself popular on board at the time when I joined the ship. He was gifted with a pleasing bass voice of good quality, as well as considerable skill in its use; and hardly an evening passed that did not find him seated astraddle of the after-hatch, trolling out some rollicking sea-song to an appreciative audience of the brig's hands. Nor was this, as I discovered later, by any means the chief among his accomplishments. Doxley Seymour was an artist of no mean order.

I made the discovery one sweltering midday, when we were some five days out of Jamaica on the homeward voyage. I was creeping along the deck, seeking some welcome patch of shade, when I came upon the tall form of Doxley Seymour seated in the shadow of the deck-house, with his long legs drawn up before him. A small-sized

canvas was supported against his knees, and he was busily occupied with his brushes. So busily occupied was he, indeed, that he did not appear to be conscious of my approach; and when he replied to my exclamation of surprise, it was with a startled air of interruption from intense abstraction. He muttered a few vague words of disparagement in answer to my praises, and then returned to his task—a portrait—with an evident desire to escape conversation.

Some days elapsed before the painting was completed to his satisfaction; and by this time my curiosity with regard to it had reached a very high pitch. It was not alone that the portrait in itself was strikingly remarkable; the unremitting persistence with which, it was evident, he sought to reproduce from memory the lineaments of some well-remembered face, his absorption in the task, and above all his obvious reticence and mystery about it, all served to arouse my interest in the matter.

In vain I rallied him, as the picture progressed, upon the subject of its mysterious original. Nothing was of avail to break down his impenetrable reserve.

'My dear fellow,' he would say very solemnly, fixing his great brown eyes pathetically upon my face, 'it's no use, really! It would be no end of a long story to tell you who this lady is, and where I met her, and how I parted from her; and when the story was told, you would never believe it. It is only a whim of mine, to commemorate a certain incident while it is still fresh in my memory; and I don't want to chatter about it to anybody.' An answer which threw me back with increased interest upon the consideration of the portrait itself.

I have it quite clearly before my eyes as I write. A woman's face, dusky and sad, but of a perfect outline, the features small and regular, the lips full and nobly curved, the hair black and glossy as a raven's wing, looped in fantastic folds about her ears—gazing intently, sorrowfully almost, out of a vague and shadowy background of sombre green; gazing—such was the painter's art—with all the changing light of life in the great deep-black eyes, with all the highly-wrought intensity of consciousness reflected in the broad forehead and the half-parted lips. It was indeed a remarkable portrait—remarkable in its execution; remarkable, magnetic almost, in the strange character of the face that it depicted.

But the interest, at least from my point of view, was not confined to the face alone. The ornaments with which the figure was decked—represented, as was evident, with no less minuteness and accuracy of remembrance than the likeness itself—were full of striking significance. The maiden was undoubtedly Indian, and the ornaments were of Indian workmanship; but my acquaintance with the aborigines of Mexico and Central America, fairly extensive as it was, had never revealed to me any native trinkets of such richness or such apparent fertility of symbolism as those which were here represented. Foremost among them to arrest the attention was the spirally-coiled serpent which formed the maiden's head-dress. With wide flat coils, between each of which her dusky skin was visible, it covered her forehead almost to the eyebrows and fitted upon the crown of her head like a cap,

its tail laid flat upon the summit of her hair, and its evil head, garnished with glittering eyes of emerald, hanging poised from the lowermost coil betwixt her eyes. With its shape, however, all likeness to a serpent ceased; for its coils were covered, not with scales, but with a close-set overlaying of feathers, fashioned alternately of silver and of gold, like a bird's wing. From the maiden's ears depended massive ear-drops of gold, wrought in the shape of flying birds; and a wide collar of mosaic-work, traced thickly round with many strange characters and symbols, completed her adornment.

Such was the portrait that aroused my curiosity, and for a long time defied all my efforts to fathom its mystery. But there came a day when the mystery was unfolded to me. I have already said that a very intimate friendship had arisen between Doxley Seymour and myself before the *Pocahontas* spread her white sails at length for the last run from the Foreland. We had had many conversations together upon the subject of our respective adventures and our discoveries, for we were both of us, in a way, travellers and students; and more than once, I believe, Seymour had been upon the point of introducing the subject of the mysterious portrait. But he had always refrained himself, as it were, at the last moment; and when the time came for us to take our last look at the familiar deck of the old brig as she lay at her berth in the docks, the explanation remained still unspoken.

At the docks we separated; for, while I was bound for the London home of an old chum, with whom I had promised to spend my first few days in England, Seymour had informed me of his intention to take up quarters in some quiet street near the river, where he would be ready, as soon as the roving instinct became strong in him once more, to take ship to any part of the globe with the least possible delay. Such was his condition of restlessness and uncertainty at that time; whether indeed natural to him, or whether induced by some foreboding of mischief, that warned him of the danger of inactivity, I cannot say. A few days later I received a note from him, dated from a certain Sumatra Terrace in Deptford, begging me, if I had an evening to spare, to find him out and smoke a pipe with him to the memory of the *Pocahontas*.

Sumatra Terrace was not an easy locality to find; but, with the aid of a local urchin—an amphibious creature, half street-boy, half mud-lark, wholly a riverside product—I found myself standing at last at the end of the dreary row of houses which was my goal. A pawnshop flared flauntingly at one corner of the terrace; a marine store loomed desolate and neglected at the other. The terrace itself, a stunted growth of blighted houses, was cut short abruptly by the bare wall of a wharfside warehouse, beyond which a few bare masts and phantom funnels rose spectrewise into the falling twilight. No. 5, the house of which I was in search, was the last house on one side of the terrace, gloomier and more stunted even than its neighbours, overshadowed and extinguished, as it were, by the high dock-wall. A flight of some half-dozen steps, guarded by a rusty hand-rail, led to the narrow front-door, where a mouldering old female, very hard of hearing and very sparing of

speech, was taking an evening airing. To my inquiry if Mr Seymour lodged there she mumbled an affirmative; and adding querulously, 'You'll find 'im upstairs, mister!' vanished abruptly into the darkness of the passage.

I groped my way up the staircase, and knocked at the door of the room which she had seemed to indicate. It was a somewhat barely-furnished sitting-room of the ordinary second-rate lodging-house pattern, engrafted, as it were, with a strong nautical strain in the subject-matter of the pictures and the frowsiness of the cabin-like smell. Doxley Seymour was seated reading before a comfortable fire, for the early autumn evenings were already chilly, and the warmth of the tropics was still dear to us; and hung over the centre of the mantelpiece, framed in a massive and handsome frame, was the mysterious portrait of the Indian maiden.

Seymour greeted me heartily, and laughed over the account of my encounter with his landlady; but he seemed—so I thought—rather nervous and ill at ease. Presently, after some minutes' conversation upon indifferent topics—the first impressions of our return to the old country, the changes that a few years had brought, and so on—he asked abruptly:

'You have never by any chance taken up the subject of Aztec picture-writing, I suppose?'

I replied in the negative, adding that I believed the opportunities for its study were scarce and difficult of access; and after a minute's thoughtful deliberation he went on:

'I have a scroll here that I am very anxious to decipher, if only I could come across the fellow who could help me with it, or put me on the right track. I am abnormally inquisitive about it. It conveys nothing to you, eh?'

He raised his arm to the mantelpiece and drew forth something which he placed in my hands. It was a small oblong scrap of some substance like parchment, very glossy, and of a yellowish-brown colour. Two thongs of twisted grass or bark, each about a foot in length, were attached to the ends of the strip of parchment, which measured perhaps some four inches by two. The parchment itself was covered thickly upon one side with minute characters, each of them distinct and delicately tinted in various colours. I examined it closely, holding it in the firelight; and gradually I made out the figures of many animals, drawn with some correctness; human faces, too, and serpents, and a number of strange designs whose significance I was unable even to guess at—all jumbled together, apparently, in the most incomprehensible confusion on the narrow scroll. The object was no doubt of considerable interest as a curiosity, and I pored over it for some time before returning it to Doxley Seymour.

'I am afraid I can't make much out of it, Seymour, old man,' I said, with a laugh. 'Have you any sort of notion what it is all about?'

He appeared to meditate for some moments before answering me.

'I don't know why I shouldn't tell you,' he laughed at length. 'No doubt it will appear incredible to you, and you will only have my word for its truth; but you shall hear for yourself. You were very curious, I remember, about the identity of that portrait there,' nodding his head towards the mantelpiece. 'Well, that por-

trait and this Aztec scroll are very closely connected; so closely, indeed, that the same tale will tell you all I know about each of them. Fill up your glass, old fellow.'

He placed a bottle and some glasses on the table at my elbow, lit the gas, and went back to his place by the fireside. Then, after a minute's deliberation, he spoke again, fixing his eyes on the changing flames as they danced and flickered in the grate.

'You already know,' he began, 'the life that I have been leading ever since I left college. It has exercised a fascination over me which will never, I believe, suffer me to settle down to any career of permanence or respectability; but that is by the way. For six years now I have been a sojourner in every quarter of the globe, and I have met with my fair share of adventures in one way and another, but never with an adventure so marvellous or so grave as the one I encountered just six months ago. Previous to that I had been spending some time in Mexico, studying the Toltec and Aztec remains, with a view to their comparison with the antiquities of Egypt—a work which I may yet, I hope, bring to a conclusion; and while in the interior, not far from Puebla, I got wind of the remains of an ancient temple, reported to be in a remarkable state of preservation, some thirty miles distant. It was not one of the well-known antiquities; but the reports which I received were so encouraging that I determined to pay it a visit. Unfortunately I went alone. The ruin proved to be one of the ordinary pyramidal *teocallis*, of small size, but (as I had been told) in rare condition, and remarkably free from vegetation or overgrowth. Indeed, I remember it struck me at the time, considering the denseness of the growth which surrounded it on all sides, that the slopes of the *teocalli* must have been kept clear by the hand of man. The steps at one of its angles were still, too, in fairly good order; and I was able to ascend to the summit without much trouble. I spent some time in examining the ruins; and then, as the sun was almost at its noonday strength and my ride back to the nearest village (where I had left my traps) was but a short one, I crept into one of the crumbling turrets which were still standing on the summit of the pile, and determined to get a couple of hours' sleep.'

Doxley Seymour stirred the fire vigorously. 'This is where the strange part of it begins,' he said nervously, glancing at me for the first time. 'I must have slept longer than I intended, for when I came to myself the sun had gone round behind the turret, and the interior was almost dark. I tried to get up from the ground, and found that my feet were bound together at the ankles. A band of twisted fibre was passed also round my body, pinning my arms; so that, literally speaking, I could not move hand or foot. I had evidently been caught in a trap. In a moment or two, as my senses began to come back to me, I saw an old Indian squatting in the corner of the turret watching me. I speak advisedly when I say that he was the most villainous-looking object that my eyes have ever rested on; and yet there was a certain air of authority, of exalted triumph, about him, which made me feel that I had not fallen into the hands of any ordinary native cut-throat. Of course I started upon him at once,

demanding my instant release, and threatening him with all manner of penalties for detaining me; but his only recognition of my speech was to shuffle to the entrance of the turret and call some name shrilly two or three times in succession.

'And that brings me to the portrait.

'In answer to his cries a girl appeared—that girl whom I have tried to paint from memory. I don't say, mind, that the portrait is a fair one; far from it. It can give you no notion of her grace, her carriage, her softness of voice; my poor skill is useless to express her play of feature, the charm— Excuse me, my dear fellow,' Seymour broke off, with a short, unsteady laugh; 'you can't be expected to enter into all that, of course; but you can see how the land lies. I tell you frankly—I confess it without shame—I was in love with that girl, and I would have made her my wife.'

He threw out the words defiantly, as a sort of challenge, but I did not respond to it. Ridiculous, repugnant, in a manner, as was the idea of a cultivated Englishman talking gravely of having conceived an attachment to an unknown native woman—especially under such circumstances of suspicion as Seymour's narrative seemed to hint at—yet the portrait did undoubtedly offer some explanation, even some palliation, of the absurdity. It was a portrait, in the first place, of a woman of undeniably great beauty, and possibly great attractiveness; moreover, the countenance bore traces of a much higher degree of intellect and mental refinement than was usual among the Indians; and there was a subtle air of power, a sort of spiritual fascination, in the whole presentment, as it appeared on the canvas, which was most striking. Therefore I held my peace, merely nodding affirmatively; and Doxley Seymour proceeded somewhat more temperately:

'Of course, in saying that I am anticipating matters considerably. At the time when I first saw Cioagalco—that was her name—I was conscious only of a sensation of wonder and, perhaps, of admiration, which almost prevailed over my natural resentment. She was wearing the ornaments which you see depicted there—and which so aroused your curiosity, by-the-by, my friend—and was dressed, as you see her, in a long white robe, beautifully embroidered. It was the costume of her order—so I learnt afterwards—and of great antiquity; but that is by the way. When she appeared within the turret she stood apart at first for some minutes in conversation with the old Indian, and then she approached me, speaking in very fair Spanish. And what think you, with the utmost simplicity and unconcern, she told me? That at this remote and solitary *teocalli* the heathen worship of her fathers, the Aztecs, was still, in closest secrecy, carried on; that she and the old Indian, her father, were the appointed priests of its sacred rites; and that I, a wayfarer whom the gods themselves had surely designated, was destined to be reserved till the next annual festival as a victim to one of their infernal deities!

'It was a cheerful prospect, wasn't it? And I lay under it for several weeks. During the whole of that time I was confined in the turret, without chance of escape; not, indeed, bound hand and foot, as I had been at first, but attached by the twisted thong around my body to a solid ring

embedded in the stonework of the floor. At first I had hopes of a speedy rescue; but as the days wore on and no help came, it dawned upon me that my absence must have passed unnoticed, or that the search for me, if any had been made, must have been abandoned as fruitless. But a gleam of light and hope was still left to me. I was regularly supplied with food—good enough of its kind—and always by the Indian maid Cioagalco. Her father I saw little of; though he came for a short time each day to gloat over my condition. But with Cioagalco it was different. Our conversations—for which the recurrence of every meal gave opportunity—became daily more prolonged and more intimate. Almost from the beginning, I believe, she felt pity for me. She did, indeed, at first—sublime enthusiast as she was—attempt to impress upon me that no fate could be more blessed than mine, or attended with more pleasant prospects in the after-world. But presently—don't think I want to boast; I say it with no vanity, God knows—another feeling came to take the place of sympathy; and then her convictions wavered. How hard a fight it was for the poor girl no one can ever know, for the superstitions of her creed were bound fast around her very nature like iron bands, clamped and shrunken upon her by ignorance and fear. But nature got the better of superstition for a time at any rate. I don't want to dwell upon that part of my story. It is enough to tell you that there came a night at last when Cioagalco cut through my bonds with her own hands, and I was free.

He was silent for some moments, apparently buried in thought, and then with an effort he proceeded:

'Our plans were formed. Cioagalco was to accompany me, to be baptised, to become my wife as soon as opportunity offered. Everything was arranged for—save Fate. It was a brilliantly-moonlit night; so much the better for our flight through the forest. In death-like silence we crept out of the turret and across the flat summit of the *teocalli*. Seventy feet below us the forest slept. The *teocalli* was built in three stages, connected with each other by broken flights of steps, steep and irregular. We had already made our way down the two first flights, and were crossing the platform of the lowest stage towards the head of the last flight of steps, when a slight noise above us made us turn our heads. There, on the topmost verge of the ruin, black and sharp against the moon's disc as it peeped over the crumbling edge, stood the figure of the old Indian, black-robed and threatening. His gaunt arms were flung above his head; his long, wild hair fluttered in the wind; and, in a tongue unknown to me, he uttered some words that rang shrilly through the night air. In that instant I felt a shiver pass through Cioagalco's arm; she shrank away from my side; a dull, dazed look took the place of the momentary terror that had leapt into her eyes. A second later the dazed look passed away; she pushed out her arms as if to keep me from her; and then, with a shuddering cry, she turned and sped back up the crumbling steps of the *teocalli*.

'What I did then I will not attempt to reconcile either with good sense or, perhaps, with honour. I simply ran away. I dared not face again the horrors of the *teocalli*; the girl's sudden

revulsion, her recoil, her freezing look of mingled terror and remorse and abhorrence—inspired I knew not by what means—had unnerved me. I did not pause to think or reason until I had reached the village from which I had set out three weeks before; and then, indeed, I bitterly repented of my cowardice. Early on the following morning I departed once more for the *teocalli*, this time accompanied by a Spanish señor whom I could trust. The *teocalli* was abandoned!—empty! Our footsteps rang hollow on the stone flooring of the deserted turrets; the ring was there to which my bonds had been attached, but no sign of any recent occupation. I searched the forest round about; I caused inquiries to be made of the natives in the neighbourhood; but all of no avail.'

'And you never traced your captors?' I queried as Seymour glanced inquiringly into my face.

'Never. The natives may have been really ignorant, or they may have been in league with the practices that went on; it comes to the same thing. I have never seen the face of either of them to this day.'

Doxley Seymour remained sunk in thought, his hands deep in his pockets, his eyes bent upon the ground.

'But the Aztec scroll that you showed me?' I suggested presently. 'Where does that come in?'

'Ah yes! the Aztec scroll,' he rejoined absently. 'I forgot that. On first awaking in the turret I found that scroll (as I discovered it to be afterwards) bound round my forehead by the thongs at either end. It remained there upon my brow until the day of my flight; and it was not until I was deep in the recesses of the forest that night that I tore it off and thrust it into my pocket. When I examined it I found it to be what you have seen; but I have never yet come across the man who could interpret it to me. I have an idea, a fancy only, that it is a sort of dedication to the gods—an appropriation of me, the victim, to the peculiar deity to whom I was destined to be sacrificed! That is only my conjecture; but, sooner or later, if ingenuity can effect it, I mean to decipher the legend for myself. When that time comes I will let you know; till then, if you can't help me, let us drop the subject.'

And so the conversation turned to other topics—our home-voyage, our memories of the *Pocahontas*, our plans for the future; and a pleasant evening passed away without further reference to Doxley Seymour's strange adventure in the uplands of Mexico.

Several weeks went by before I heard from him again. I had been staying in the country, revisiting the scenes which memory still endowed with interest, renewing the friendships which absence had dulled, revigorating the love of my native land, which many years' domicile in other climes, perhaps, had impaired. On the second day after my return to London a short note was delivered at my lodgings, bearing the signature of Doxley Seymour.

'Dear friend,' it ran, 'I have solved the Aztec riddle—unaided, by perseverance alone. When you have no engagement more enticing, find your way to Sumatra Terrace, and I will expound the enigma. My conjecture was right; it was my death-warrant.'

It needed no greater inducement to determine me upon prompt acceptance. That very evening I started forth as the gas-lamps in the streets began to wink and glimmer in the wintry twilight, and accomplished the journey to my destination without assistance. Darkness had settled down upon the jostling rows of streets as I turned the corner of Sumatra Terrace and strode down its deserted pavement. The refuse-yard of the marine store, burial-place of many a good ship's carcass, lay black and neglected on the other side of the way; the black row of stunted houses, pierced at intervals by the glimmer of a dim-lit window, seemed blacker than ever by contrast with the brightness of the streets which I had left; one gas-bracket only, fixed in the black dock-wall at the farther end of the terrace, peered blinking out of the blackness of the night.

As I reached the pavement in front of No. 5, the house in which Doxley Seymour lodged, the street-door opened. A beam of light shone for an instant down the outside steps, a dark figure emerged, and the street-door was pulled together as noiselessly as it had opened.

The dark figure—the figure of a thickly-cloaked woman—tripped down the steps and brushed by me as I stood at the bottom with one hand upon the rusty iron rail. As our shoulders touched she started violently and turned half-way round towards me, for she had not, I believe, perceived me standing there; and as she did so the light from the gas-bracket close at hand in the dock-wall struck upon her face. It was the face of Doxley Seymour's picture!

I was sure of it. There could be no mistake about that face—the dusky hue, the perfect outlines, above all the strange, intent expression of the eyes—although its setting, some sort of hooded cloak, was now so different. What could she, the Indian maid of Seymour's story, be doing here? I strained my eyes to pierce the darkness of the street; but the cloaked figure, gliding forward with the swift, lithe movement of some forest animal, was already almost indiscernible. A moment later it had melted into the night; and I turned to ascend the steps.

The same mouldering old person whom I had encountered on my former visit opened the door to my knock, and defiantly informed me, with much shortness of breath, that there was a lady upstairs along with Mr Seymour, so I couldn't go up on no account, but would I leave a message?

'But the lady, I think, has just left him,' I ventured, wondering what turn things were taking. 'I met a lady going out as I got here.'

The old person grunted with a somewhat modified aggressiveness, and held open the door an inch or two wider.

'Oh! very well,' she grumbled. 'I didn't hear no one go; but I'm none so sharp of hearing as I was. She ain't been with him long, then; but it's no concern of mine. You'd better walk upstairs, mister.'

I cannot be sure whether I recollect aright in thinking that it was with some unusual foreboding of mischief, with some undefined sense of calamity and danger, that I set my foot upon the stairs as the old woman shuffled back to her quarters below. Is my impression only the product of after-events, or did some dawning light

of foreknowledge really break in upon my mind? I cannot decide now. I only know that I ran upstairs sharply, anxious to get to Seymour's room and satisfy myself—of what?

The gas was burning brightly in the room when I entered it. Seymour was seated at the table with his back towards me; leaning sideways in his chair, his arm thrown loosely over the back of it, writing materials spread out on the table before him. He did not turn to greet me when I entered the room; he made no sign of consciousness when I spoke; and then indeed a panic fear, which admitted of no denial, came surging into my breast. I ran across the room towards him and touched his dangling hand; and I knew the worst. His face, though deathly pale, bore the impress of a smile, a smile of welcome; the haft of a broad-bladed dagger—a curiously-wrought haft, I noticed even in that moment, fashioned in the likeness of an eagle's head—protruded from his coat above the heart; and round his brow, like a placard, was bound the Aztec scroll.

And on the sheet of paper before him, traced in Doxley Seymour's own bold handwriting, fraught with a hideous mocking significance, were written these words—the unfinished translation, I doubt not, of the scroll that was around his brow, the translation that he had been engaged upon at the moment of his death:

'This is the Doom of Quetzalcoatl, mighty God of the air, moon-faced Father of men, whose honour is our Law inviolable'—

CURIOSITIES OF LAND TENURE.

IN these utilitarian days when hard cash, or, to use the American equivalent, the almighty dollar, is the dominant factor in life, we do not expect to find landlords parting with their lands for the merely nominal return which satisfied some of their ancestors in feudal times. Land has become too valuable a commodity for such generosity. Occasionally, indeed, we find in a modern building lease a stipulation for 'a peppercorn rent;' but on continuing a perusal of the document it will be found that the 'peppercorn,' as might be inferred, is a merely temporary expedient to last only for such a length of time as will enable the jerry-builder to erect his buildings and reap some return from them before he is called upon to pay the rent ultimately exigible. In 'the good old days' when feudalism was in the ascendant—times which, notwithstanding their violence, were not altogether destitute of redeeming features—we find the close personal relationship which subsisted between lord and man sometimes curiously reflected in the services rendered by the vassal in respect of his land. Students of the law of real property are familiar with the salient features of the old tenures, of knight-service, grand and petit serjeanty, and free and common socage; but through these domains there stretch little bypaths which the generality of law students, eager to know only so much historical matter as will explain the present-day condition of the land laws, may easily overlook; these

sidepaths, nevertheless, will amply reward the literary wayfarer who seeks to explore them.

Although instances of quaint tenure-services can be found in almost every English county, Kent seems to have enjoyed a singular pre-eminence in this respect. Here are a few examples. The owner of the manor of West Peckham was bound, in return for the grant of the manor, to find a man to carry the king's goshawks beyond sea; in the case of the manor of Seaton, the lord had either to go himself or provide a man to go as *vautrarius*—that is, leader of the king's greyhounds—whenever the monarch went to Gascony, and the time to be so given was thus curiously fixed, 'until he (the *vautrarius*) had worn out a pair of shoes worth fourpence, bought at the king's cost!' But the most ludicrous instance of all was in the case of Archer's Court, an estate in the parish of River, a few miles from Dover; the tenure was in grand serjeanty, the service being that the owner should accompany the king on his various journeys between Dover and Wissant on the French coast, and hold the royal head should there be occasion for it. While kings can

Make a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that,

and confer gifts of land, they can grant no immunity from the dreaded *mal de mer*, and what could the poor tenant do if he too, like his liege lord, suffered its pangs? Would it not even show disloyalty for the vassal to feel 'all right' while the august monarch was prostrated? But neither upon this point nor upon the other equally interesting one, namely, whether, in the peculiar circumstances, failure to perform the required services would work an escheat—the vassal might perhaps plead '*vis major*,' or 'acts of the king's enemy'—have we any information; but we are told that the right to perform the duty was claimed towards the end of the sixteenth century. Another estate in the same county was held by a much more agreeable tenure—namely, the liability to carry the last dish of the second course to the king's table, and present the sovereign with three maple cups. Presenting gilt spurs, providing a ship or a certain quota of men, or breeding and rearing a falcon or hound were extremely common forms for the services to take. Leaving Kent, we find that Bury House, in the New Forest, was—perhaps still is—held under the obligation of presenting the sovereign, whenever he or she enters the Forest, with a brace of milk-white greyhounds, a breed being preserved in readiness. George III., in 1789, was the recipient of the complimentary leash, the incident of the ceremony being considered sufficiently interesting to form the subject of a canvas by Sir Thomas Lawrence.

For many centuries the city of Norwich, in respect of the manor of Carleton, was liable to provide annually twenty-four herring pies for the royal kitchen. Blomefield, in his *History of Norfolk*, referring to this quaint service, prints a letter from the household officers of Charles I., making 'divers just exceptions' to the quality of the pies which had been forwarded by the city sheriffs. The whole letter will bear transcription; it ran as follows:—

'To Alexander Anguish, Mayor; John Thacker and William Gostlin, Sheriffs.

'After our hearty commendations we have thought fit to let you understand, that upon the delivery here at court of the *herring pyes*, which we lately received from you, we find divers just exceptions to be taken against the goodness of them, which we must require you to answer, and take such order that the same may be amended for the future tyme, as you would avoid further trouble; the exceptions we take are these, viz.:

'*First*, you do not send them according to your tenure of the *first new herrings* that are taken.

'*Secondly*, you do not cause them to be well baked in good and strong pastye, as they ought to be, that they may endure the carriage the better.

'*Thirdly*, whereas you should by your tenure, bake in these pastyes *six-score* herrings at the least, being the great hundredth, which doth require *five* to be put into every *pye* at the least, we find but *fewer* herrings to be in divers of them.

'*Fourthly*, the number of pyes which you sent at this tyme we find to be fewer than have been sent heretofore, and divers of them much broken.

'And *lastly*, we understand the bringer of them was constrained to make *three* several journeys to you before he could have them, whereas it seemeth he is bound to come but once.

'To every of which our exceptions, we must pray your particular answer for our better satisfaction, that we may have no cause to question it further, and so we bid you heartily farewell.

'Your loving friends,

PENBROKE.

JOHN SAVILE.

RICH. MANLEY.

'HAMPTON COURT, the
iiij. of Oct. 1629.'

Greater care, we are told, was promised by the sheriffs for the future. The rent, it appears, originated in the early days when Norwich stood at the head of a wide estuary, when as yet its entrance was not blocked up by the sandbank on which Yarmouth now stands. Mention is made of the service so late as 1835 in the report on municipal corporations in England.

The city of London has also its curious services to render annually. Each year on the morrow of St Michael, or between that day and the morrow of St Martin, the City Solicitor attends before the Queen's Remembrancer, to account for the services due by the city in respect of a piece of waste ground in the county of Salop, called 'The Moors,' and for a tenement, called 'The Forge,' in the parish of St Clement Danes, Strand. After the reading of certain documents this time-honoured proclamation is made: 'Oyez, oyez, tenants and occupiers of a piece of waste ground, called "The Moors," in the county of Salop, come forth and do your service.' Two small bundles of peeled twigs, each tied at the ends with red tape, are then produced, one of which the solicitor cuts in two with a billhook, and the other he treats in a similar fashion, with this difference, that a hatchet is substituted for the billhook. This archaic ceremony symbolises the right of the Crown, as lord, to receive, and the obligation on the city, as vassal, to

furnish fuel as one of the incidents of the tenure. A second proclamation is then made: 'Tenants and occupiers of a certain tenement, called "The Forge," in the parish of St Clement Danes, in the county of Middlesex, come forth and do your service.' In response to this summons, the City Solicitor, with all solemnity, counts out six horse-shoes and sixty-one hobnails, a service acknowledged by the Queen's Remembrancer saying, 'Good number.' This quaint function dates from a very remote period. With regard to 'The Moors,' that piece of ground, as appears from the Exchequer Rolls, was granted to one Nicholas de Mora, in the reign of Henry III., with this condition as to rental: 'Reddit ad seaccarium 2 cultellos, unum bonum et alterum pessimum,' wherewith to divide the fagots; but how the good and very bad knives became metamorphosed into a billhook and hatchet no man knoweth. As to 'The Forge,' it represents a piece of ground which was granted, also in the reign of Henry III., to one Walter le Brun, farrier, for the purpose of erecting thereon a forge, which was to be held under the service of rendering yearly the six horse-shoes and sixty-one hobnails. A forge was in fact built, but was demolished during the peasants' revolt, and never re-erected. The ground on which it stood, sometimes known as Fickett's Field, sometimes as the Templar's Field, was for long used by the lawyers of the Temple as a tilting ground; but so many riots seem to have been originated by this employment of the ground that the city ultimately acquired it, and ousted the Templars. 'The Moors' also at an early date fell into the hands of the corporation, the obligation of rendering the stated services, of course, passing with the property.

Although not particularly curious, the services rendered by the Dukes of Marlborough and Wellington for the estates of Woodstock and Strathfieldsaye respectively are of sufficient historic interest to warrant their inclusion here. By the statute 3 and 4 Anne, c. vi., the Manor of Woodstock and the Hundred of Wooton, with their numerous 'appurtenances,' were settled on John, Duke of Marlborough, and his heirs, 'to be holden of Her Majesty, Her Heirs and Successors, as of her castle of Windsor in free and common socage by Fealty, and rendering to Her Majesty, Her Heirs and Successors, on the second day of August in every year [the anniversary of Blenheim] for ever, at the Castle of Windsor, one standard or colours with three *Plower de Luces* painted thereupon, for all manner of Rents, Services, Exactions, and Demands whatsoever.' In the same way, the Act 55 Geo. III. c. 186, passed immediately after Waterloo, granted a sum of money to be expended in the purchase of a suitable residence and estate for the Duke of Wellington, which estate when acquired was directed 'to be holden by the said Duke and his heirs, and the persons who may be entitled thereto of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, as of his Castle of Windsor in free and common socage by Fealty, and rendering to His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, on the eighteenth day of June in every year, at the Castle of Windsor, one Tri-coloured Flag, for all manner of Rents, Services, Exactions, and Demands whatsoever.'

These banners are regularly presented to Her Majesty at Windsor on the two anniversaries, and are then suspended in the Guard Chamber of the Castle, where they are usually pointed out to visitors.

In Scotland tenure-services analogous in point of singularity, though not so common, are not unknown. In a recent volume of the *Exchequer Rolls of Scotland* (vol. xv.) several are noticed; of these the most curious is that of the barony of Carnwath, which was charged with the burden of providing an annual prize, consisting of two pairs of hose containing two half-yards of English cloth, for a foot-race. Elsewhere we read of a more singular case—that of certain lands near Cramond, in Midlothian, which were held under the service of furnishing the sovereign every time he (or she) passed over Cramond Bridge with a ewer of water, basin, and towel. This is said to have originated in a grant by James V. to a peasant of the lands of Braehead, in return for services rendered to the monarch, *qua* the Gudeman of Ballangeich. James had been engaged in an expedition similar to that celebrated in the song 'The Jolly Beggar,' when he was set upon by some of the relatives of the fair one as he was returning from the rendezvous. He was being hard pressed by his assailants, when a peasant came to the rescue, and assisted in beating off the attacking party. When the conflict was over this peasant conducted James to a barn, where a basin and towel were with some difficulty procured for the king to remove from his person all traces of the fray. Entering into conversation with his squire, James ascertained that the summit of his ambition was to own the farm on which he laboured. Some time afterwards the farm, which belonged to the Crown, fell vacant, whereupon the peasant was requested to visit Holyrood Palace and inquire for the Gudeman of Ballangeich; and on his doing so he found, greatly to his astonishment, that the Gudeman was none other than the king himself, and still more to his amazement, he was informed by James that a grant was to be made to him of the farm he had so great an ambition to possess. A charter was subsequently executed confirming the gift, and bearing that the grant was made on the condition that the grantee and his successors should present a ewer, basin, and towel for the king to wash his hands each time he happened to pass Cramond Bridge.

The crest, a demi-huntsman winding a horn, and the motto, 'Free for a Blast,' of the Clerk family of Penicuik, Midlothian, reflect the fact that their estate is held by the service of winding a horn three times whenever the sovereign comes to hunt on the Borough Moor of Edinburgh. The Borough Moor has long been represented by Bruntsfield Links, and considering the state of its surroundings now, it is one of the last places a monarch would ever dream of connecting with the chase; so that the present and future possessors of the estate are not likely to be seriously inconvenienced on the score of their tenure.

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'THE PALACE OF GOLDEN DEEDS.'

AN INDIAN FAMINE LEGEND.

THE evening sunlight was casting long slanting rays across the alleys of roses in the palace garden at Chandnapur, the heat was abating, and the king came forth upon the terrace to 'eat the air.' A servant appeared with a profound salaam, saying that a wandering minstrel was at the gate, and the order was given that he should be brought in. Seating himself cross-legged upon the ground, he tuned his *sitar* (lute) and sang songs of war and peace, finally making his hero end his career in a palace of gold and marble built in the Himalayas and looking upon the eternal snows.

The little party on the terrace consisted of the king, his only son, Prince Ahmed, a fine young fellow of twenty, and the Vizier, a clever and humane man, who had received the name of Yusuf the Good by universal acclamation. After the minstrel departed they sat and smoked in a silence broken only by the bubbling of the water in the hookah and the soft cooing of doves among the trees.

Suddenly the king started up, saying, 'I too will have a palace in the Himalayas built of marble and roofed with gold. We are at peace with all our enemies; our treasure is great. What say you, Yusuf; is it not well thought of?'

Without waiting for a reply, he continued: 'You will go this cold weather and get the palace built, and we will follow ere the hot weather comes to parch the plains of Hindustan. You will get marble from the quarries in our own territory, and it will be roofed with gold. What a wonder it will be!' said the king, warming to his subject. 'It will seem as if it were built out of the snow-peaks and the sunshine; and all men will speak of the new wonder of Hindustan, the Golden Palace of King Azuf Ali.'

The king of Chandnapur was originally a brave warrior and a good enough ruler as these times went, but he had gradually become a despot, from the mere fact that no one ever contradicted

him! However, as he had a great regard for his Vizier, and was, though unconsciously, much influenced by him, things went on fairly well. But now and again, as in the present instance, some new fancy or whim took possession of him so vehemently that it was not possible to turn him from it; and Yusuf, sadly recognising that, though this seemed a passing fancy born of a minstrel's tale, it might be a most disastrous one, gently strove to lead his mind to other things. In vain he spoke of new plans for decorating his private gardens, of strange animals to be procured for his menagerie; and last of all, in graver tones, Yusuf reminded the king that, owing to the failure of the rains, a great famine was imminent in many parts of his kingdom, and every gold mohur in the treasury might be needed to cope with it. But in vain; the king had set his heart on the palace, and the palace he would have. Yusuf received orders to depart speedily with camel-loads of treasure and skilled workmen to carry out plans which the king had drawn out himself. Yusuf was in despair; so many things would be at a standstill in his absence, and famine was beginning to press heavily on the people. Prince Ahmed, too, was sorrowful; for, unknown to his father, he loved Amina, the beautiful daughter of the Vizier. Her mother had been a Circassian, and the court poets sang her praises as being 'fair as the moon, with eyes like stars.' Yusuf would carry his household with him, and the presence of Amina would no longer brighten Chandnapur.

In less than a month everything was ready, and Yusuf, with a long train of camels and a considerable retinue, passed out of the city gates.

After a time a messenger came on a swift dromedary, saying that Yusuf had found a beautiful valley at the foot of the Himalayas with a suitable site for the palace in Khasnath, the most distant part of the kingdom. He also mentioned that famine had begun to do its terrible work, and the people were dying of hunger and disease in all directions. The king thought only of the palace, but Prince Ahmed asked about the

famine, and heard terrible tales of people dying of pestilence by the roadside, or in the midst of cities and villages, no one daring to touch them. There were many sick in the valley, the messenger said, and many orphans; but Yusuf the Good had a like-minded daughter, and she had turned an old ruinous palace, called the 'Lall Kothi,' into a home for the sick and the orphans, and tended them herself from morning to night.

After a little time an imploring appeal came from Yusuf that he might be allowed to use the treasure he had taken to help and save the people dying all around him. In Chandnapur prices were exorbitant. There was great scarcity, but not absolute famine; so the king merely sent back an angry reply that he would start at the appointed time, and if the palace was not ready woe betide them!

No further intelligence came except an enigmatical message that the desire of the king would be fulfilled and all would be well.

At the time fixed—early in March according to our reckoning—the king and all his great retinue set out. For some days after leaving Chandnapur they journeyed through a comparatively fertile country. When the tents were pitched under the shade of great tamarind or neem trees, the country-people came offering supplies of fowls, milk, eggs, &c.; but soon all this ceased. Instead of the winter crops being reaped, the fields stood untilled; and as they drew near Gopur, the territory of a Hindu Rajah, the desolation became more and more striking—the bare fields had no cattle, the villages were almost deserted, while dead bodies or portions of skeletons strewed the ground. The water in the wells was tainted; the very air seemed heavy; and worst of all, the pestilence which followed the famine broke out in the king's camp. His oldest and wisest advisers begged him to turn from this ill-fated journey; but his sole answer was to point onwards to the Himalayas rising in their wondrous snow-peaks, and leaving the sick to die or recover as they might, they pressed onwards.

Prince Ahmed at this time frequently went off in the dress of a *shikar* (hunter) and mixed freely with the country-people. They told him that Yusuf the Good was saving the lives of the people in Khasnath, supplying them with food, giving them work at canals, and providing them with seed-corn; but not a word did he hear about the palace of gold and marble, which would certainly have been talked of far and near, and grave forebodings filled his mind. Rumour also told how the good and beautiful daughter of Yusuf had fed many orphans and tended a great many sick folks in the old palace of the Lall Kothi.

Ahmed returned to the camp with a good bag of game to account for his absence, and said not a word to any one about what he had heard. It was quite evident to him that Yusuf had saved the people of Khasnath from famine with all its horrors, but to do so he must have spent the treasure destined to build the Golden Palace!

What would the king say or do? He saw only too plainly that his father, like a child with a new toy, could think or speak of nothing but his palace; while the acting prime minister, Azof Khan, a crafty man, flattered him to the top of his bent.

They were now in the territory of Khasnath, and were within twenty-four hours' journey of the valley among the wooded peaks of the lower Himalayas, where Yusuf said he had found a site for the palace. There was now a wonderful change in the face of the country; canals intersected the wide plain; the ryots were working in their fields, reaping their spring crops, watering their plots of vegetables and their fruit-trees which lined the roads. There was scarcity, no doubt; food was dear, and supplies of all kinds came in slowly; but the awful scenes which had met their eyes as they marched along the borders of the Gopur territory were nowhere visible, while the praises of Yusuf the Good rang out upon the air from every village which they passed.

The king's impatience to reach his destination was so great that they made a second march in the cool of the evening to get over the low wooded ridge which lay between them and the valley. Just before reaching the height, as the king was carried along in his *palki*, while the bearers chanted their monotonous song and Prince Ahmed walked alongside, a strange figure appeared, as if by magic, in the middle of the path.

He wore the yellow cloth of a fakir and a white flannel cap, the Brahminical thread was across his shoulder, from his ears hung great ear-rings of carved bone, in one hand he carried his begging-bowl made of a gourd, and in the other was a long staff. 'Out of the way,' shouted the king's head *chuprassi*, who walked before the *palki* with a silver *lathi* (stick). The fakir stood silent; only a fiery gleam in his deep-set eyes showed that he heard and resented the insult, and waving him aside, he commanded the bearers to stop. Then, standing by the *palki*, the fakir looked upon the king and said, 'O great sovereign, thou knowest me not, but I am the hermit of Kala Devi.'

At these words a shudder passed through all who heard, for the hermit and the shrine of Kala Devi, a small temple on a spur of the Himalayas, were known and revered all over northern India.

'I have come, O king,' he said, 'for the first time for long years from the mountains where I dwell ever among the stars and the mighty torrents, to warn thee that before thee lie the paths of life and of death; the gods give thee a choice, and if thou dost choose the evil and reject the good, on thine own head be the peril.' As he uttered the last words he vanished among the great trees and the undergrowth which was all around their path, as suddenly and silently as he had come.

Azof Khan, who had come up meanwhile, made some jeering remarks on the mysterious nature of the prophecy, but all the others kept silent, and Prince Ahmed walked along full of thought; to him it was plain enough, and confirmed all his previous surmises.

They reached the summit of the ridge just as the sun was setting; the town and lake of Khasnath lay at the upper end of a wide fertile valley dotted with villages which were surrounded by mango and peach orchards, showing dark among the fertile fields.

A few miles down they reached the camp which had been hurriedly prepared, and in the morning hastened on again. The king was not at all pleased that Yusuf had not come to meet

him, forgetting the rapid way in which they had got over their journey.

About an hour after they started on their march the cry arose: 'Yusuf, Yusuf the Good comes to meet the preserver of the faithful;' and in a few minutes Yusuf appeared and knelt to welcome his king. He was pale and worn, but looked calm and serene, and in answer to all the king's eager inquiries about the Golden Palace, asked him to wait and see it for himself.

Meanwhile he attended the king, and pointed out to him the cultivated fields, the irrigation works, the fruit-trees loaded with fruit, the cheerful, happy people. It was all in vain; the king would look at nothing, think of nothing; his one cry was, 'Where is my palace?'

They journeyed on past the banks of the lake, past the city with its minarets and temples, past more fields and orchards and villages, till at last they came close to the Himalayas. There, on a spur of the hill jutting out into the valley, rose a large building of brown wood, beautifully carved and surrounded by lovely gardens full of roses and creepers; but the king would not look at it, and still expected that round some corner would appear the Golden Palace.

When they arrived on the broad terrace facing down the valley and looking through a gorge in the hills to the snows, Yusuf requested the king to descend from the *palki* (which was made of solid silver, with curtains of cashmere shawls). He then said: 'O king, preserver of the faithful, live for ever, and forgive thy slave for what he has done. When he came here he found poverty and death all around. How could he spend the king's treasure so well as in saving his people? So the gold that should have covered the roof of the palace was spent in averting the ruin and disaster which would have otherwise come upon Khasnath the fertile, the beautiful, the brightest jewel in the king's dominions.'

The king listened in a kind of stupor, then said, scowling and with a snarl like an infuriated animal: 'Villain, what hast thou done? Where is my palace?'

'Here, O king,' said Yusuf, pointing to the building beside them, which was adorned with beautiful carved verandas and pillars of brown sheshem wood. 'This palace was built by the people of Khasnath, and carved, as you see, with every beauteous device, in token of their love and gratitude. All has been done, the plateau cut, the paths made, the gardens planted; all is the service of love; not one pice has been spent on it;' and as Yusuf spoke a glow of joy suffused his noble features, while a low murmur of applause came from the bystanders.

From the king alone came no response. His brow grew black as night; then he cried, foaming with rage, 'Dog, slave, wouldst thou cheat me thus? What care I for love and gratitude, forsooth! Thou shalt die, and that speedily.'

To his guards he said: 'Take this man, keep him safely on your peril, and ere the first beam of sunshine touches the brow of the mountain, cut off his head.'

He charged Azof Khan to carry out these instructions, and thrusting aside Prince Ahmed, who vainly tried to intercede for his old friend, he retired sullenly to his chamber, and refused admittance to all.

Completely wearied out by the journey and by his own rage, he went early to rest, giving orders that he was not to be disturbed, and hoping in his heart that the execution would be over long before he awoke.

Yusuf sat calmly in the little hut to which the guard had most unwillingly taken him. 'Fear not, brethren,' he said; 'I will not try to escape.' So the guard sat quietly outside the hut, cooking their supper and talking in whispers, while the wonderful eastern moonlight shone on the wooded ridges and the distant snow-peaks glistening like molten silver.

Ahmed's slender figure, clad in his hunting-suit, appeared at the door of the hut, and sitting down beside Yusuf, he poured forth his grief and indignation.

Yusuf listened quietly, and said he had only one care—what was to become of Amina? The prince told him that was what he had come to speak of. The people of Khasnath were furious, and ready to rise in insurrection, but the hermit of Kala Devi had appeared, and commanded them to wait in patience and silence. Then seeking out the prince, the hermit said he was to tell Yusuf that there was a little bungalow not very far from the shrine, where Amina and her old ayah could dwell in absolute safety. No living man, not the king himself, would dare to take them away from there.

'That is well,' said Yusuf; 'often since I have been here have I heard of the hermit of Kala Devi, but little did I think I would be indebted to him thus.'

Ahmed then went on to tell Yusuf that he would give up his right to succeed to the throne, would marry Amina, and live the life of a *shikari* among the hills. But to this proposal Yusuf would not listen for a moment.

'That must never be, my prince,' he said sadly. 'You are the hope of the people, and must not forsake them. If all had been well, if there had been no famine, if I had pleased my lord the king with a palace beautiful as his dreams, then my child, who is good as she is beautiful, might have been the prince's bride. But stay; here she comes to bid me a last farewell. Forget these fancies, rule the people well, and peace ever go with thee.'

Two veiled figures now passed into the tent, and Ahmed hurried into the depths of the wooded slope to wait for the dawn.

Meanwhile the king tossed wearily to and fro. Sleep would not come to him, woo her as he might. The bygone years when Yusuf had been his trusted adviser rose up before him, and when he thought of his loyalty as prime minister and of his bravery in the old days when they rode together in the thickest of the fight, he tossed and groaned in bitterness of spirit, but never altered his cruel resolve. Die he must and should.

About midnight he fell asleep, and as he slept it seemed that a shining angel stood beside his bed, took him by the hand, and lifted him up and up, far above the snowy range to the very gates of Paradise. Passing in, they went on till they came to a palace of gold and marble, inlaid with the richest gems, of the most harmonious proportions and beautiful design.

'Wonderful!' cried the king. 'Here is my

palace, the very structure I dreamed of, but far, far more beautiful than mortal eyes ever beheld.'

'Thy palace,' said the angel, and there was a touch of scorn in the sweet voice; 'that is the palace of Yusuf the Good. It is a palace of golden deeds, built up of all his good actions—his justice, his truthfulness; above all, his compassion for the poor and suffering. See, thou canst read the blessings of the poor on every part of the building, and their prayers are the gems that enrich it. Thy palace, sayest thou? What good deeds have reared a palace for thee? None, in all thy long life, filled with self-love, greed, ambition, cruelty, and now crowned with the blackest deed of all, the murder of the faithful servant who saved with incredible efforts your poor people from death by plague and famine.'

An awful dread fell upon the king. The form of the angel seemed to tower above him like an avenging spirit, crying, 'Go, go from Paradise to the blackness of darkness for ever!'

The unhappy man fell rapidly downwards, and in his agony he awoke. Was it true?—was it a dream?—what was it? The words 'the murder of Yusuf' rang in his ears. Was it dawn? Rushing out, he demanded of the guards, like a man distraught, if the sun had yet risen.

It had not, but the tom-toms were beating and the solemn procession was forming. In a few minutes more it would have been too late.

Azof Khan, who was attending as prime minister, Prince Ahmed, the guards, Yusuf himself, all were astounded when they saw the figure of the king, half-clad and regardless of all ceremony, rushing wildly from the palace. He threw himself on Yusuf's neck, imploring his forgiveness with tears. He then told his dream, and asked Yusuf to teach him also to build a 'Palace of Golden Deeds.'

It is needless to dwell on the joy of the people, on Prince Ahmed's relief, or on the true gladness which filled Yusuf's heart when he found that the change wrought on the king was a lasting one. From that night, with its terrible experience, he was a different man, and during the rest of his reign, which was not very long, strove with all his might to build for himself a 'Palace of Golden Deeds.'

Ahmed, who succeeded him, married Amina, and ruled his people with wisdom and justice for many long years.

A NIGHT IN AUSTIN FRIARS.

CHAPTER III.—OLD GRINOLD'S GOLD.

SHUTTLEWORTH replaced the note-book in his pocket, as a sign that business formalities might be dispensed with now, and moved towards the hearth. Warrener followed him, and they soon became absorbed in earnest talk. But Helen had resumed her place at the table, her head resting between her hands, with a far-off look in her wondering eyes.

The thought that Anthony Grinold would leave his fortune to her had never entered the girl's head. She had been glad of the opportunity which a chance encounter in the dusty garret in Austin Friars had given her of gaining his recognition and friendship. The financier had

made it possible for her to brighten the last years of his lonely life. She had never looked for reward. His gratitude for her companionship, his praise of her as a woman with a head for affairs, had been to her compensation enough. Helen had never dreamt that by encouraging his schemes of finance she would reap for herself a golden harvest in due time—a packet of foreign bonds! Her thoughts naturally reverted to Gilbert Ringham now. She had taken him into her confidence. She had told him how, barely four-and-twenty hours ago, Mr Grinold had sat in restless anticipation, waiting for his coming. She had been at the financier's beck and call the greater part of yesterday, and it had pained her to witness his fierce impatience to hold the foreign bonds in his hands. And he was dead; and she was waiting for Gilbert Ringham—alone!

She looked round, and became instantly conscious that Ralph Shuttleworth's keen eyes were bent upon her. 'I'm going to ask you, Miss Warrener,' said he, 'to let me relate a certain incident in Mr Grinold's life. It will interest your father; it might even interest you.'

Helen answered evasively. 'Would it not be as well,' she said, 'to send over to Mr Ringham?'

'The man from Cairo?'

'Yes.'

'No, no!' Warrener interposed. 'Let him wait'—

'But you forget, father,' Helen persisted. 'Mr Ringham is our guest.'

'Do I? Ask our friend here,' said her father. 'Haven't I commissioned you, Shuttleworth, to bring him back with you to supper? My dear Helen! the young fellow must make our house his headquarters, of course, as long as he stops in town.'

The girl sank back in her chair. The matter of settling with Gilbert Ringham rested with the executors, no doubt; and yet Helen could not hide from herself that she felt impatient—impatient for the coming of the man who held her fortune in his hand!

'I'm going to be exceedingly brief,' Shuttleworth now began, with an apologetic glance at Helen. 'I'm merely going to tell your father what happened upon a certain night in Austin Friars. A letter of Mr Grinold's, hidden among his deeds, put me in possession of the secret. I've destroyed the letter. The incident need never be known except to us three who are here together. Is that understood?'

For a moment he was silent, though scarcely looking for any response. 'On the top floor there is a garret,' he then resumed, 'a favourite room of Mr Grinold's at one time. He was confessedly a miser—in this confidential letter to me—and gloated over his gold. One evening, while kneeling upon the rug in the centre of this room, among his bags of money, he heard a suppressed cry, and looking up, he saw a pair of eyes staring down at him over the back of a great arm-chair in a shady corner. These eyes, as described by Mr Grinold, were large, dark, laughing eyes—laughing at him! His first feeling was that of rage and indignation. But when a pretty child of twelve years of age or thereabout'—

'Seventeen,' Helen interposed.

'I beg pardon. When a young lady of seventeen,' said Shuttleworth, with another apologetic

glance, 'came nimbly forward and began to put the gold back into the bags his anger changed into shame. The girl had discovered his secret; but with a delicacy and tact which relieved them both of embarrassment, she acted as though the gold had been upset upon the floor by pure accident. Having had her laugh at the mishap, she made herself useful by assisting this elderly gentleman to collect the scattered coins. When he learnt that she was the daughter of an old clerk—the only clerk he had retained in his employment—it crossed his mind to bind her to a promise never to betray him. But he did a wiser thing than that. He began to feel intuitively that to show a sign of distrust would be a fatal mistake. He entered into the spirit of the situation, and helped her to pick up the gold as though they were having a game of Tom Tiddler in a quiet way. From that day forth these two were true friends. It was shortly after this incident occurred that Mr Grinold altered his will. He left all his gold to the girl who had gathered it up for him—who has guarded his secret right loyally ever since.'

'Dear me!' said Helen's father in a wonder-stricken voice. 'A miser, was he?'

'Mr Grinold ceased to be a miser,' said Shuttleworth, 'upon the night of his meeting with that dark-eyed girl in Austin Friars.'

He glanced at Helen as if for confirmation.

'Yes,' she assured him, 'Mr Grinold invested his money to advantage—invested it finally in foreign bonds. These bonds should have been delivered in London—having been despatched by special courier from Cairo—yesterday morning at latest. But owing to the dense fog—'

'Stop!' and the ex-manager turned quickly in his chair. 'Why didn't Mr Ringham explain his business?'

'Why should he, father? It was a private affair. He could not have delivered the bonds to you. His instructions were specific: "To Anthony Grinold, or his order." Ask Mr Shuttleworth. What could have been done?'

'Nothing,' the lawyer affirmed; 'nothing with-out me.'

The City had become intensely dark. The fog had thickened until the endless lights in the thoroughfares had become murky and blurred. But Ralph Shuttleworth, as he held on his way toward the 'Two Swans,' frequently hustled by the bewildered crowd, smiled with increasing blandness at every step. Nothing in the nature of these gloomy surroundings seemed capable of putting him out of humour to-night. For the hope of winning Helen Warrener—a hope that he had dubiously entertained hitherto—began to take a definite hold upon his thoughts. He had long regarded her as a woman who, as his wife, would help him to win a position he craved for in society. Old Grinold's gold—these thirty thousand pounds—might even gain for him a seat in parliament. He would transfer his business in the City to a flat in Westminster, and then— But here his ambitious castle-building had to be abandoned for the nonce. He had reached the entrance to the hotel where 'the man from Cairo' lodged. His look became concentrated, his manner impressive, as he went up the steps of the 'Two Swans' inn.

Meanwhile John Warrener, having taken his troubles cosily, began to contemplate his daughter's windfall with a cosiness that did him equal credit. He sat rubbing his fat hands in a self-gratulatory manner over the fire, and nodding approval at the changed prospects. 'Thirty thousand pounds! Wonderful! Why, Helen, it's like a page out of some old romance, ain't it?'

'Yes, father,' she answered mechanically, her thoughts miles away.

He seemed to need no encouragement. 'The ups and downs of this life,' he went on in his trite manner, 'are most startling. It's a regular game of see-saw! Why, scarcely a couple of hours ago—'

'Father,' said Helen, of a sudden breaking in upon his soliloquy, 'I can't realise that I've been left all this money! I can't help thinking that I shall be roused up presently and be told that it's only a dream.'

Warrener laughed. 'I hope not, Helen, for Shuttleworth's sake as well as our own. I should like to pay that little debt—wouldn't you? But come!' and he suddenly grew more serious. 'Your nerves have been over-screwed of late. You look pale and tired. Can't we do anything to divert your mind? A game of cribbage, or—'

Helen shook her head. She moved restlessly towards the window. 'They're a long time coming, father. Isn't it getting late?'

Warrener glanced at the clock. 'So it is! What can be keeping them, I wonder? Shuttleworth is the last man, as a rule, to linger over matters of business—isn't he?'

Turning from the window, Helen said: 'I've a presentiment—just as Mr Grinold had last night—that something has happened. I would ask you to go over to the "Swans," father, if it wasn't such a raw and foggy night.'

'I detest these London fogs,' and Warrener began to poke the fire into a brighter blaze. 'What should you say, now, to spending the winter in Nice? There'll be absolutely nothing to keep us in town after next week. Dear me! I can't think how I've lived in such a trying climate all these years.'

Helen made no reply. But she came and sat down beside him, and touched his hand compassionately, and there was more eloquence in the tender action than could have been expressed in words. He had never known any change of scene or climate—none worth recording—within her recollection. He had spent the best part of a lifetime within the sunless precincts of Austin Friars, wearing the elbows of his coat periodically threadbare by friction with the desk in Mr Grinold's office. Her own young life had been monotonous too. But what was that in comparison to the irksome days her father had endured for five-and-twenty years and more?

Yes! they should set out for the south of France as soon as the Grinold estate had been administered. They would then be free to come and go whithersoever they might choose. And then her thoughts sped on eastward to Cairo, and here she loitered in fancy, wandering through its busy Oriental streets with Gilbert Ringham at her side. As in dreamland, so in this waking dream, Helen Warrener never paused to reflect

how it chanced that he should be always there. If the knowledge that she had inherited Mr Grinold's gold had inspired the dream, the old financier himself had ceased for the hour to occupy her mind. She had been carried away by her father's mention of Nice into a new world; and out of this world she was suddenly startled by a sounding knock at the hall door.

A moment later, as Helen had reason to remember long afterwards, she saw Ralph Shuttleworth standing in the room, his hand still upon the closed door, glaring round him like a hawk that has lost its quarry.

'The man from Cairo!' said he in a bated, eager tone—'he's not here?'

'No,' she heard her father answer him while rising hastily. 'Haven't you seen him?'

She saw Shuttleworth step forward, a look of the pursuer still in his searching eyes. 'Warrener, he's gone!'

'Gone! Impossible! What can you mean?'

'Absconded,' she heard the lawyer affirm as he sank wearily into a chair. 'Absconded with the foreign bonds.'

MODERN MAGIC AND ASTROLOGY.

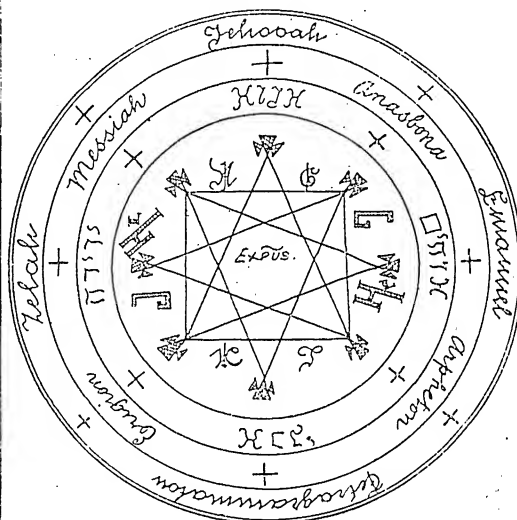
THERE is a very general belief that astrology is now to be counted among the dead and discredited sciences; that the waning industry of star-study, with reference to the influence of the planets on mundane affairs, received its death-blow at the hands of the Board schoolmaster, if, indeed, it was not quite dead years before the evolution of that functionary. This is a mistake; the people who believe in the readings of the stars are to be counted by tens of thousands, and their peculiar requirements give occasion for a not inconsiderable industry, of which little is heard by the more practical people who take no interest in the occult sciences. Of course everybody knows that there are humble professors who risk fine or imprisonment by telling fortunes with the aid of cards—that was once an important phase of the Black Art; now we no longer regard it as black, but merely shady. Whether these practitioners use the cards approved by the ancient astrological authorities I don't know; I imagine not, for the seventy-eight card pack, called the 'torot' or 'torrochi' cards, is useless in the hands of any one who has not mastered the very intricate mode of manipulation as set forth in a handy little reprint from the work of some astrologer of the Middle Ages. These 'torot' cards are similar in size to ordinary playing-cards, and, to a certain extent, correspond with them in the matter of pips; but the twenty-six extra cards are somewhat different, and all are embellished with designs which to the uninitiated are only quaint and fanciful, but to the informed are pregnant with meaning.

An interesting feature of the old books on astrology is the attention paid to the preparation of talismans. If you suppose that talismans are out of date in the present year of grace you are hugely mistaken. They are sold in hundreds to people of all grades of society, from the highest to the lowest. Let me add at once that these 'charms,' if you like to call them so, are not haphazard devices of modern ingenuity; they are

faithfully copied from the 'charts' of the ancient astrologers, who, to do them justice, must have lavished enormous pains on the calculations they deemed necessary to ensure efficacy.

No doubt you may feel some curiosity concerning the appearance of these talismans. I have had the opportunity of inspecting scores of them. They consist of circles within circles and triangles and other geometrical figures, neatly drawn on parchment, on silver, and even on plates of pure gold. The substance does not affect the value of the talisman, whose virtue, I understand, depends upon the correct insertion of certain words or names and characters; and also upon the hour in which it is drawn.

The Pentacle of Rabbi Solomon.



This is an exact reproduction, on a small scale, of a talisman called 'The Pentacle of the Rabbi Solomon.' The said Rabbi was a seer of high repute a couple of hundred years ago, and this 'pentacle' may be regarded as a speciality of his own design. To quote from *Raphael's Talismanic Magic*, a very scarce reprint: 'Its virtue is such that the most evil genii which are saturnine cannot cause hurt while this pentacle is present.' Price seven-and-six; it cannot be considered dear if you believe in it, for be pleased to take note that no talisman is worth a used penny postage-stamp if you don't put absolute confidence in its virtue. Do not imagine that you can assure to yourself immunity from 'saturnine influences' by the simple process of copying this design on paper and wearing it. To be efficacious a qualified astrologer must draw it at an hour determined by various facts which only he knows how to apply to his calculations. These talismans on parchment cost from one half-crown to three, the price depending entirely on the labour entailed by their wealth or paucity of detail.

Agrippa's Occult Philosophy, published in 1651, is a good book in which to seek such assistance; it would now fetch ten guineas as a curiosity. *Gadbury's Doctrine of Nativities* (1648) is another, equally rare and no less curious. More accessible, perhaps, is the unabridged reprint of

Barrett's *Magus* (1801), *The Books of the Magi*, which is a compilation from the writings of ancient astrologers. Glancing through the charts or designs for talismans in these old volumes, one cannot fail to be impressed by their purpose. Human nature in the seventeenth century was the human nature of to-day. Here you find talismans 'To Engage Love,' 'To Secure Honour and Riches,' 'To Preserve Bodily Health,' 'To Avert Accident;' and I may remark that the two first named are chiefest in demand to-day. The purchasers send for them from every quarter of the world. Americans take great numbers, as also do British colonists. The half-breed peoples of India and Africa buy these talismans; and some among the West African half-castes place such dependence upon them that they will not undertake a journey by land or water until the talisman against contingent perils is in their possession. I need hardly add that the 'charm' is carried on the person, preferably worn by a string round the neck.

The owners of fishing-vessels all round our coasts are constant patrons of the dealer in these articles. Seafaring folk are proverbially superstitious, and the trade in half-crown parchment talismans against 'Dangers of the Ocean' may be fairly described as 'roaring.' One reason of this, no doubt, is that they are more liable to damage than talismans worn by people whose vocation does not require them to face bad weather at all seasons of the year; they must, therefore, be more frequently renewed.

The majority of purchasers are content with the cheap form, but many—the more robust believers—have the appropriate design engraved on a silver disc. The most costly talisman I have heard of cost no less than twenty pounds; it was engraved on a disc of pure gold, three inches and a half in diameter, and was made to the order of a lady—wild astrologers shall not tear from me her name or the end that talisman was to achieve. A complete list of the purposes of the various designs set forth by these old astrologers would fill a page of this journal, so you must accept my word for it that you can name no misfortune or evil against which these far-seeing magicians failed to provide. Low be it whispered, but 'tis said that there be among the Chosen of the Sovereign People those who put their trust—or some of it—in talismans, and that the approach of a General Election gives the dealers' draughtsmen just a little extra work. I do not mean to imply that there is a special design which influences in favour of the wearer the vote of the free and independent elector; but there is at least one greatly extolled as certain to secure the co-operation of those who have it in their power to further your wishes.

Before we leave this department of the occult it is worth glancing at the real secret of the efficacy of some talismanic devices. An immense number of people, and by no means the least intelligent, are gifted with strong power of belief; if a person has *absolute belief* in the efficacy of a something to preserve him, let us say, from accident, possession of that something will undoubtedly increase his confidence; and he, gaining that confidence to the exclusion of fear, will have his wits about him, and be less liable to incur accident which would be more likely to

overtake him were he harassed by anxiety lest such should befall him. Take, for example, the case of the fisherman who has unquestioning faith in the square of parchment round his neck: free from anxiety lest the storm should send him to the bottom, he can and does devote all his wits and energies to the sail and the tiller. If he pulls through in safety while others come to grief, he ascribes to his talisman the better fortune which is of course due to his own artificially but effectually increased boldness in coping with the elements. Against such a talisman there is nothing to be said; it is simply and solely the tangible *something* which aids the wearer, much as 'signing the pledge' strengthens the purpose of the drunkard who is really anxious to reform. We all know that self-confidence is an important factor in fighting life's battle. The talismans recommended by the ancient sages to ensure success to the gambler, or to ward off rain at undesirable times, come under a totally different category; but the circumstance does not prevent the disbursement thereon of hundredweights of half-crowns.

The performances of Colonel Olcott, Madame Blavatsky, and their followers have faded from the public mind of late years, but the next phase of the subject necessarily recalls them; their names and deeds, it may be remembered, were closely associated with the occult properties of crystal balls. We do not hear much about these mysterious things nowadays; but it would be quite wrong to conclude that the crystal sphere is discredited among the faithful. Large numbers are sold every year—few, by comparison, with the parchment talismans of course, and for excellent reasons; in the first place, the parchment worn next the skin requires periodical renewal; in the next, the crystal ball will last for ever, and is, moreover, expensive. The genuine article—real crystal—may cost as much as thirty pounds; but that is a luxury only accessible to the wealthy and earnest prober into the future; for fifteen shillings or a guinea you may possess yourself of a composition or glass ball nicely served up in a morocco case lined with satin like a jeweller's casket, and this will answer the purpose equally well. They are usually made perfect spheres; but if you prefer it egg-shaped you can order an 'ovoid crystal.' I understand that astrology recognises no difference in the relative merits of the two forms. Tinted balls for weak-eyed students and silvered mirror crystals resembling the globes used to adorn Christmas-trees are worth passing mention. The chief essential to success in using the crystal ball is great concentration: a north light is recommended, for reasons I am unable to explain, but is not absolutely necessary. You recline in an easy attitude, hold the ball up to the light, and centre your mind upon it until you see something; that which you see is going to happen. My knowledge of this particular matter is so slender that I will say no more about it. That crystal balls have their sincere believers would seem to be proved by the prices they command; the richest man, or woman, does not pay thirty sovereigns for a sphere of crystal the size of a lawn-tennis ball unless he confidently anticipates some return for his money.

To turn to another department. There is a

wide and increasing demand for periodical literature associated with astrology. *Raphael's Almanac* has been a hardy annual for seventy-seven years, and grows yearly in popularity, particularly on the other side of the Atlantic. The sale of this little sixpenny booklet, I have been told by the publishers, Foulsham & Co., of Pilgrim Street, E.C., amounts now to upwards of two hundred thousand copies a year. It has been growing steadily, and of late years with remarkable rapidity. Known to students of the occult, if not to the general public, is a much larger work which must have cost years of labour and literally acres of mathematical calculations. This is *Raphael's Astronomical Ephemeris of the Planets' Places*. It may be described as a minutely detailed astronomical calendar by which the exact relative positions of any given planets or groups of planets at any hour since the year of grace 1800 may be ascertained. This monument of industry sells largely in America. It is said to be indispensable to the conscientious astrologer; and in view of the fact that all his reckonings and predictions are based upon the positions of the planets at given moments, we may safely conclude that this calendar is very necessary to him.

The casual seeker after the curious in the occult is only too liable to forget his scepticism when he finds himself surrounded by rare and curious old books, and to turn over the leaves in search of entertainment; and surely he need not dip very deeply to find it. One such volume is *Christian Astrology modestly treated of in Three Books*, by William Lilly. Mr Lilly gave this work to the world in 1648, and, if modest, he is at least tolerably sure of himself. Thus, for instance, he tells the reader how he shall know one who was born under the influence of the planet Mars: 'The Martialists have this forme: they are but of middle stature, their bodies strong and the bones big, rather leane than fat: their complexions of a browne or ruddy colour or of an high colour: the Visage round, the Haire red or sandy flaxen and many times crissing or curling. Sharpe hazle Eyes, and they piercing: a bold confident countenance, and the man active and fearlesse.' Mars presides over what we might flippantly call a 'mixed crew,' according to Mr Lilly's classification. He 'rules' generals and captains of armies, butchers, 'theeves,' botchers (i.e. cobblers and tailors), headsmen, and others. Another delightful old tome is *Sibley's Astrology* (1798). This is a book more difficult to lay down than any novel; it is so simply earnest and quaint in its wild extravagance. Mr Sibley was a seer of exceptional talents, and he laid his learning before the world with an open-hearted frankness that does him infinite credit. One of his more important specialities was raising the spirits of the dead. He gives minute and precise directions concerning the method to be employed. Space forbids quotation in full; but, in brief, the seer and his assistant were to repair to the graveyard at midnight, and between that hour and one in the morning were to dig down into the chosen grave by the light of a 'consecrated torch.' When the seer with his wand could touch the corpse, he and his assistant stood in a magic circle previously drawn on the ground, and the seer pronounced in solemn, measured tone an incantation duly set forth by Mr Sibley. This done, 'the corpse will

rise slowly, and in fainte, hollowe tones make answer to questions put.' Observe, there is no mincing qualification. He does not say 'should rise' or 'ought to rise'; it *will* rise and obey the seer's 'liege commands.' A full-page illustration shows the awesome rite, as performed, if I remember aright, by one Doctor Kelly. The scene is a graveyard, a neat church in the background, the moon throwing faint shadows from a cloudy sky. In the foreground two old men in monkish habits stand in the circle bedight with cabalistic signs, one holding a torch, the other a book and a wand. They have just raised a ghost, a poor pale thing in shroud and nightcap, standing stiffly to 'attention.' The ghost looks most horribly frightened, and the seer and his assistant wear expressions which suggest that they regret their success. The gentleman with the book, who has really done the deed, undoubtedly is wishing that he—or the spirit—had not come. A weirder picture, and one better calculated to cause 'bad dreams,' was never drawn by man. It may be remarked that special preparations and invocations are prescribed by Mr Sibley for the raising of spirits whose bodies met with a violent death; but into these gruesome matters we need not pry. These old books, or some of them, abound with portraits of evil spirits drawn from memory by the seers who raised them; they are all hideous caricatures of humanity. It was the wholesome principle of the ancient astrologers to represent evil as repulsive, for which at least they are entitled to our respect.

THE FREIBERG EXPERT.

A TALE OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA GOLDFIELDS.

By ROGER POCCOCK.

I.

My only neighbour up the Gulch was Looney the Fool, a young man with large round spectacles and a full-moon smile. Looney had never put up the drinks in his life, wore gloves when he worked in his shaft, knew no more of silver-mining than a six months' infant, talked like an idiot when he talked at all, made no friends, knew nobody, had no registered vote, bought nothing in Amber, sold nothing, and spent his Sundays collecting twigs, leaves, weeds, and all sorts of rubbish, which he kept pressed out in a book of blotting-paper.

All up the mountains on both sides of the Gulch the granite was rich as you please in silver and carbonates. Every vein in the camp was easy to work by tunnelling, fortunes were being made on every side, and every man with the sense of a horse seemed to speculate in mines or town lots except Looney.

There was one streak of ground in the district which nobody but a natural-born idiot would have thought of prospecting, and that was the deep alluvial at the bottom of Amber Gulch. One could not tunnel there because the ground was flat; to sink a shaft there meant pumping; and as the underground half of the Amber River ran loose among big boulders down on bedrock, you might pump for ever without lowering the water an inch.

That is why Looney had located his claim on

the flat just where Granite Creek came in from the north, making a big Y. It was enough to make a man sick, the very thought of such a proposition as Looney's deep caisson down to bedrock. Why, his pumping had cost one fortune, his idiotic mill had cost another, his water-rights for milling had cost a third; but I must say that Looney never seemed out of funds. The stuff he took out from the caisson certainly wasn't silver—I'd tested that once on my own account just to make sure. It was a sort of yellow dirt, not a bit like any paying rock that I knew of. So, with my cabin just below the fork of the river, and Looney's cabin and model mill just above in the Y, I never had spoken to the critter for twelve whole months.

But when the Noble Five Syndicate stole the water which fed poor Looney's flume it made me mad. The man might be only fit for the county asylum, but he had paid hard cash for every drop of water he used, and I calculated that there is enough straight American in me to see fair-play. So I went to call on Looney that very night.

'Mister,' says I, 'we ain't acquainted yet, but my name's Jim Ballantyne.'

He smiled his full-moon smile and asked me to sit down. He was squatting on his doorstep like a heathen idol, smiling down the Gulch towards Amber city as though he'd leased it for the purpose; so I sat down on a chunk of granite and filled my old corncob, wondering if the critter would object to smoke.

'I think,' he said, calm as you please, 'you are my first visitor in nineteen months.'

'That may be, mister; but the Noble Five Mine has jumped your water, which ain't straight dealing.'

'My friend, I am Looney the Fool. I have no rights which anybody need respect.'

'What are you going to do about it? Law?'

'A wise man would go to law, Mr Ballantyne—a fool would say: "What's the good of a ten thousand dollar man litigating against a two million dollar syndicate?"'

'Look here,' says I; 'you may be, as all the Gulch says, a natural-born idiot, but this thing ain't square, and I'm going to see you through.'

'Mr Ballantyne, if you were a harmless maniac like myself I could understand that remark; but you being a very clever and a very popular man, your motive seems obscure.'

'You think us a bad lot—eh?'

He smiled.

'Well, I'll just prove we ain't.'

'Mr Ballantyne, is it possible that any of you could act from disinterested motives? You have apparently nothing to gain.'

'Well,' says I, 'down east, where I was raised, there's something which has no price, which isn't in the market, which can't be bought or sold—and that's called Justice.'

II.

Now, as to my boasting to Looney that I'd see him through, I don't lay claim to being anything more than a common scrub prospector; but if you go to Amber and ask the first man you meet, 'What is Jim Ballantyne?' the answer will be, 'Square!' The reason is, that once the manager of the Amber Bank skipped the camp with such a

load of plunder that we came very near being a busted community. That night a ragged ass of a prospector who had been fooled like the rest of us knew enough to guess which way the thief had run, gave chase on the yard engine from Amber depôt, caught up with the manager, who rode a thoroughbred Arab, captured all the plunder, and brought it back to town in time to stop a big commercial panic. Moreover, the said prospector was Jim Ballantyne, and the said thief was Peter G. Ballantyne, his own brother. That is why Jim Ballantyne is generally known as 'square!'

Well, to return to this business about Looney the Fool. We were having rather a rough time, so to speak, in Amber, because the town was full of deadbeats, tramps, gamblers, toughs, and still worse vermin not to be named before ladies, all attracted, of course, by the boom at the Noble Five Mines. Men were waylaid and sand-bagged in narrow alleys; miners too drunk to know any better were drugged and robbed in the saloons; travellers were held up by an occasional road agent; about once a month there would be a shooting scrap and a funeral.

Of course the Vigilance Committee continued to notify the worst hard cases, who usually took the hint and slid out; but our merchants were too busy to do the thing properly by holding lynching soirées. As for me, I took things easily, because the people who were shot were not of the kind to be missed; and if a man gets drunk, to be cleaned out by toughs is part of the entertainment. Fifty saloons and only one church for fifteen hundred people might seem peculiar to some; but if strangers don't understand an Idaho mining-camp—that's their infirmity. Let them therefore continue strangers.

Shooting is all right, sand-bagging is all right, faro games are all right, but jumping water-rights is crooked, which ain't all right. Without his flume of water even an idiot can't run a stamp-mill, and Looney had a clean record, which the Noble Five Syndicate had not. Why, it was only three months before that they jumped one of our back-streets for a railway siding, on which occasion the Vigilance Committee turned loose a barrel of free drinks for our citizens to refresh themselves while they tore up the track.

How I slanged that Vigilance Committee! I just went for them with both hoofs. I found them in M'Phail's back-store, making cigar-smoke and resolutions about clearing out our surplus population.

What did their moral suasion amount to when they only *talked* about lynching, and stood by while a decent, quiet citizen was being robbed and ruined up the Gulch? One of the Noble Five officials was, like me, a member of the Committee, but he had to shut his mouth and sit tight when I opened fire with facts.

Next morning the Committee took a personally-conducted crowd of tourists up to the Noble Five Flume; and by the time we had finished investigating, the dam was blown up, the flume was dispersed, and a notice posted that any son of a gun who jumped water-rights in our Gulch should swing.

The courts would have kept Looney in litigation for years with the thieves in possession, then ended by nonsuiting him with costs; but our Committee fixed the whole thing before breakfast.

The result was that Looney and I became acquainted. 'Jim,' says he from behind his goggles, 'I've been waiting a year now for a practical local partner. The one qualification was honesty. I want you.'

Fancy me having a lunatic for my partner! I laughed, and, just to please him, said it was a go. But when he took me into the mill, and showed me round, I quit laughing. The thing he made me his partner in was no asylum game. The lunatic wasn't on the premises, unless it was me; and when I thought of all I'd said or felt it made me sick.

'Look here,' says Looney, taking me outside. 'What do you call these mountains?'

'Granite,' says I, straight out.

'Both?'

'Both.'

'The experts of Amber Gulch don't know granite from syenite.'

I was nettled—some. 'There may be a sight of difference,' I argued. 'On the one side the granite is gray, on the other it has a shade or so of pink; but what odds? We're mining-men here, not Freiberg experts, thank Heaven.'

'I,' said Looney, quite quiet-like, 'am a Freiberg expert.'

'The deuce!'

'No, only an expert. These ridges on either side of the Gulch are of different ages and different chemical structure. Both rocks are nearly equally friable, as it happens, but there seems to have been a line of depression on the line of contact. The water has carved out this valley along that line. Why, man'—he pointed down the Gulch—'don't you see?'

I did see, as though I had just left off being blind. One side of the trench was twice as steep as the other.

'And the contact?' said I.

'I have found it under thirty feet of alluvium. Moreover, I had seen the like in another country in a tin district. Why, man, the whole country is stained with stannic acid!'

'That may be. We Western men don't know tin—we have none; and when the Cousin Jacks' (Cornish miners) 'began to come, we ran them out. What is the contact like?'

'Ten to fifteen feet of the richest oxides of tin ever discovered.'

'Why, tin ranks next to silver.'

'My friend, it's worth untold millions to this nation, and to us wealth beyond the dreams of avarice. But to be able to leave this place with some feeling of security, I wanted to find an honest man popular enough, strong enough to hold the ground during my absence, to stave off officious inquirers, to keep the secret. So far I have been protected by my supposed lunacy. Now I have found you, my watch-dog, while I rake up capital in New York.'

I did not believe a word. It was all too good to be true; but Looney was saner than I was, any way. That night he left for New York.

Six months I held down that property, giving myself out as Looney's hired man. Then came a letter—I have it here:

'DEAR WATCHDOG,—The Great Western Railroad is in doubt whether to cross the Bitterroot range by the Dead Mule Pass or the Amber. The

Dead Mule people offer a bonus of one hundred thousand dollars. Go to your Vigilance Committee and tell them that if they can get Amber to put up that amount you will double it. The enclosure is your warrant.—Yours, THE LUNATIC.'

Enclosed I found a cheque—one hundred thousand dollars!

Another six months I held down the property, and whether I believed or not then I can't make out. Any way, somebody must have believed in my partner to the extent of one hundred thousand dollars—the cheque was honoured; and, fool or not, he had treated me like a white man. One or two parties would come along from time to time with orders from Looney to show them around the claim. But they said nothing. The railroad was graded half-way over the pass; the Lunatic was almost forgotten in Amber; the Gulch was booming to such an extent that the population doubled every three months, regular as clock-work; and the Wild Cat claims I had never thought worth my assessments sold at fancy prices to a casual tenderfoot. But still I waited—never budged an inch. Meanwhile I held for Looney his mortgage on the city waterworks for a hundred thousand at eight per cent., invested all my own wealth in real estate, lived on the rents, and began to put on fat.

Well, one muddy day, late in the fall, I strolled down to Amber for a square meal and a smoke with Dan M'Phail; but half-way along the wagon-road, all slush and mire, I had to stand aside for a carriage. Of course there was only one in the Gulch kept by the livery people for elections and funerals.

'Whose procession?' says I to Spotty Joe on the box.

'Job lot of tourists,' says Joe, spitting over his shoulder, just clear of a shiny silk hat.

'Stop!' cried some one out of the carriage. 'Is that Jim Ballantyne?'

'What spike-tail tourist is calling me Jim?' I began to get mad. 'My name's Mister to silk hats.'

And then I saw who it was—Looney in a silk hat and fur coat, regular store clothes, but no goggles, no scrubby beard, with no fool look about him whatever. At his side was a beautiful lady, laughing fit to bust.

'Mister Ballantyne,' said he, 'let me present you to my wife.'

But all I could do was to stare. Why, not a soul in the Gulch would have known him by sight except me!

'Come, Jim, plenty of room; jump in. I'm taking Mrs Marchmont to see our little mining proposition up yonder.'

I looked at my pea-jacket, all dust, and boots up to the calves in mud.

'All right,' said Looney, understanding; 'we're stopping at the French House. Dine with us at seven—so long.'

You may be sure I bought the best store clothes in camp, besides a large gold albert watch-chain, a nugget breast-pin, and some rings before I showed up at the hotel for dinner. When I arrived, the turkey was served in a private parlour, with champagne wine and fixings. Mrs Marchmont had sleeves like the balloons at Forepaugh's Circus. Looney was gotten up like a

waiter, to show how humble he felt at having to entertain a roustabout like me. I was on my best behaviour, you bet; but Looney talked for the three of us, and Mrs Marchmont she just laughed. For some reason best known to herself, she cleared out after dinner, perhaps to help wash up; while we men had our cigars on the veranda.

'Well,' says Looney, 'did you think I would never come back?'

'You was twelve months.'

'That's so. It took me six to buy up the bed of this gulch.'

'The what?'

'Twenty miles of it, Jim, barring the Amber town site. I have a better town-site of my own, so I guess I'll knock the bottom out of this city. You did that mortgage business fairly well.'

'Are you the devil or Jay Gould?'

'No. Only a Freiberg expert; and you, the practical man, are the Freiberg expert's partner. You thought I was in a bad way over that flume affair?'

'You was.'

'Yes, that so-called Noble Five Flume was mine—a trap I laid to catch an honest man. I caught you Jim; but the city will have to pay me for the damages or I'll wipe out your city fathers—lock, stock, and barrel. Here comes one of your honest vigilants who think murder and outrage quite irreproachable, but tore up the flume which was to have made my tin-mines prosperous.'

Then I had to laugh.

'Ahem!' says Dan M'Phail, coming up. 'How do, Jim? Will you present me to your friend?'

'Glad to see the celebrated Mr Dan M'Phail,' says Looney politely. 'Be seated, Mr M'Phail. I am Professor Julius Marchmont, at your service.'

'You villain, Jim!' says Mac in an undertone. 'Good gracious! Why didn't I wash?' M'Phail began to perspire. 'I'd have taken you'—Then he braced up like a man: 'Excuse me, sir, but, barring the whisker, you are the dead spit of a man I knew once, Professor.'

Looney chuckled, and I knew he was going to roast poor old Dan, by the cock of his eye.

'I'm glad,' he said, 'that I am only the dead spit of the gentleman. It might have been worse, M'Phail; it might have been worse.'

M'Phail was as red as a turkey-cock.

'However, Mr M'Phail, we are well met. You are the Mayor of Amber, I believe?'

'I am, Professor.'

'Will you be free at eleven to-morrow for business?'

'Right on deck,' says M'Phail, 'every time. We citizens of Amber are under tremendous obligations to the great syndicate headed by Professor Julius Marchmont. The addition of tin-mines to the already enormous resources of our locality is calculated to give us the bulge over them swine in Dead Mule Pass.'

'The bulge over them swine?' says Looney. 'I shall never be able to master the business technicalities of the Far West. However, we will reserve our business for to-morrow. You must have some wonderful characters in this district?'

'Some,' says M'Phail, accepting one of Looney's cigars, which he began to chew. 'There's Denver Shorty, Long Shorty, Tombstone Head, the Wide

West—she's a woman is the Wide West; but you should get Jim Ballantyne here to tell you about his missing partner.'

'Oh!' Looney turned to me, 'you did not mention any partner, Mr Ballantyne.'

'There wasn't no necessity,' says I.

'It's a joke we have against Jim,' says M'Phail, pointing his thumb over his shoulder at me. 'He helped a poor maniac critter up the Gulch, which I guess he'd leaked out of some asylum. We called him Looney the Fool, but Jim here was good to him—that he was—holds down a claim for him to this very day. And such a claim you never seen in all your born days. Why?'

'Let me see,' Looney broke him off short.

'There is one thing I want to see you about, Mr M'Phail—a hospital. You're collecting for a new hospital, I believe. Have you the subscription list?'

Looney handed over a roll of bills. 'Professor, I thank you,' says M'Phail, holding out his subscription list. 'I'm sure you won't mind giving us the use of a name distinguished on both sides of the Atlantic—for financial genius and hard-headed common sense.'

'You honour me too much. I pray you stop.' My partner scribbled on the list. 'There; I hope I've written it legibly.'

You should have seen M'Phail's face as he read that name:

'One thousand dollars. (Signed) LOONEY THE FOOL.'

GAS ENRICHMENT.

IN spite of the rivalry of the electric light and the extensive use of mineral-oil lamps, the gas industry—which has recently celebrated its first centenary—continues to maintain a flourishing condition. This has been contrary to general expectation, for a couple of decades ago, when the electric light first appeared in the London streets, people were so impressed with its brilliancy that gas shares came down with a terrible run. But at that date it was not foreseen that the substitution of one method of illumination for another must necessarily be a slow process. No one thought that cooking by gas would become so appreciated by the masses; that gas-engines would be largely used in place of steam; and lastly, that the customers of the gas companies would be enormously increased by the introduction of the 'penny-in-the-slot' meter.

During the period covered by these changes great improvements have been introduced into gas-making methods; and although we have the grumbler always with us, who will complain of the bad quality of the gas supplied to him and its failure to come up to his requirements, we shall generally find upon inquiry that the fault lies at his own door in the shape of badly-designed fittings.

As a matter of fact, the companies are very sharply looked after in the matter of the quality of the gas they supply; it is frequently tested by government inspectors, whose duty it is to see that it comes up to a certain required standard. That is to say, the light afforded by a specified kind of burner must be equal to that given by so many sperm-candles of a definite size. In London the standard is generally sixteen candles;

and if the gas, upon examination with the photometer, does not reach this illuminating power, a heavy fine is inflicted upon the offending company.

With the ordinary coal used for gas-making it is impossible to reach the standard of sixteen candles; and in order to comply with the law's requirements in this respect, the gas has to be 'enriched,' so that its illuminating power may be brought up to the proper point. The simplest way of achieving this result is to mix with the gas-coal a certain amount of 'cannel'—a description of coal which is naturally so gaseous that a slip of it will burn like a candle; hence its name, which is a corruption of that word. But the supply of cannel is not unlimited, and its price is high, especially in places where the cost of transport is great. This applies to London and the south of England generally; but in Edinburgh, where cannel is readily available, a gas of twenty-six candle illuminating power is supplied from the mains.

As an alternative method of enrichment, the gas may be charged at the works with the vapour of certain volatile hydrocarbons. Sometimes, as our readers will know, the enrichment can be added at the point of combustion, as in the alcoh-carbon light, where a volatile solid hydrocarbon is reduced to the vaporous condition by the heat emitted from the gas-burner. This system offers a very good and familiar instance of the process of gas enrichment. Another plan, which has come very greatly into favour during the past few years, is the admixture with the coal-gas of a certain percentage of water-gas which has itself been enriched by petroleum. As this last method may lead to something like a revolution in the present system of gas-making generally, it will be as well to see of what this water-gas consists.

When steam is allowed to act upon carbon at a high temperature—white-hot coke, for instance—it is decomposed into a mixture of hydrogen and carbon monoxide in about equal parts. Both of these gases will readily inflame, but they are non-luminous. That is to say, they will burn with a blue flame such as a spirit-lamp will have. Such gas would, of course, be useless for lighting purposes, but it can be made brilliantly luminous if it is passed into chambers in which petroleum has already been decomposed by heat. The mixture of water-gas and oil-gas thus obtained is adjusted in such proportions as to yield an illuminating power of about twenty-five candles. It is this mixture which is added to the coal-gas to bring up its illuminating power to the required standard. Such a mixture is known as carburetted water-gas, and apparatus for its production has been added, or will be soon added, to the plant of most gasworks.

The enrichment of coal-gas is an expensive process. Taking the case of London, it has been authoritatively stated that the raising of the gas supplied one degree—that is, one candle in illuminating power—costs the consumers £200,000 annually. The enrichment by carburetted water-gas is not so costly as the methods previously employed, and in time the consumers will no doubt get the benefit of the change. The raising of the illuminating power of the gas, say from fifteen to sixteen candles, although so costly, makes so little perceptible difference in the light afforded

that it could not be detected by an ordinary observer, or, indeed, by an expert without special appliances. Hence it has been urged more than once that the existing standard of sixteen candles is higher than necessary, and that the customers are needlessly taxed for its maintenance.

Another suggestion, made by the late Sir William Siemens, was that the companies should, by a system of double mains, supply a non-luminous gas for cooking and heating purposes, as well as the present gas for illumination. There is no doubt that such a gas could be supplied at a good profit at about a third of the sum now charged per thousand for gas of the ordinary kind. But in the network of pipes and wires beneath our streets there is no room for additional mains, and we fear that for this reason alone the proposed double service, although attractive to the consumer, is impracticable.

The alleged over-enrichment of gas is a question which assumes great importance as better methods of burning gas are devised, and it is in this direction that we must look for greater perfection and economy in our use of this method of illumination. The common flat-flame burner is the worst of all, for it exposes a large surface to the cooling action of the atmosphere, and the hotter we can burn our gas the more light shall we coax out of it. The argand burner is much better, and the incandescent burner is a noteworthy step in advance, which will be better appreciated when a less fragile material is found for the gauzy mantle which gives the light. The regenerative burner is one of the best which can be employed, and, like the incandescent form, the amount of luminosity does not depend at all upon the enrichment of the gas, but upon the temperature at which it is burned. It will therefore be seen that if the use of high-class burners became general, enrichment of the gas would cease to be necessary. We should obtain more light from gas of feeble illuminating power, with a great reduction in the cost. But as that day has not yet dawned, we must obtain, in the meantime, a good light-giving gas so as to meet the requirements of the faulty burners, which, because of their cheapness, are those most commonly used.

As we have already indicated, the introduction of carburetted water-gas marks an improved method of enriching or adding to the illuminating value of ordinary coal-gas. But its manufacture is found to be so easy, and to possess so many advantages when compared with the generation of coal-gas by means of retorts, that its sphere of usefulness is likely to become greatly extended in the near future. At this year's meeting of the Gas Institute at Bath, the president in his inaugural address devoted much attention to this new departure in the history of gas-making, and from his remarks we are able to gather some interesting particulars which might not otherwise gain the publicity which they undoubtedly deserve.

From this reliable source we learn, in the first place, that the carburetted water-gas apparatus already erected, or in course of erection, will be capable of generating 83 million cubic feet of gas daily. Supposing that in each year this is in operation for one hundred days, we have an amount of gas produced which would be

an equivalent of 830,000 tons of coal. At the same time, as we have already seen, an inferior kind of coal can be employed for gas production, because it can be easily brought up to standard—that is, 'enriched' by the water-gas. The storage of oil as compared with that of coal is another important item, twenty-six gallons of oil, which is the equivalent of one ton of coal, occupying only one-tenth the space—a most serious consideration when we consider the enormous quantities of fuel consumed by the gas-retorts. Then, again, the hot carbon necessary for the oil-gas process is provided by the coke, the supply of which at our gasworks is very often in excess of the demand.

Last, but by no means least in importance of the advantages claimed for the introduction of carburetted water-gas, is its bearing upon the labour question. The work of the retort-house is no child's-play, as any one who has the opportunity of seeing the men at work will testify. Half-naked to enable them to endure the terrific heat, they can be seen stoking the huge furnaces and filling the retorts or clearing them of their white-hot coke. Men are not all physically capable of standing the strain of such work, and those unfitted for it can be employed in the production of carburetted water-gas. In the winter months, when the demand for increased gas-supply comes, the gas companies are forced to employ a greatly increased staff, and the president of the Gas Institute suggests, in the address already referred to, that by supplying coal-gas in summer and carburetted water-gas in winter there would be less disparity in the number of hands employed at the two seasons, much to the advantage of those who appreciate regular work.

In spite of the enormous consumption of petroleum, there seems to be no fear that the supplies will be diminished; indeed, demand has the unexpected effect of causing prices to fall—for improved facilities for importing the oil are constantly being introduced, and new sources of supply are being found. The exhaustion of our coalfields was a few years ago a topic which was being anxiously discussed, and although there is no present fear of our falling short of the mineral wealth to which the kingdom owes so much of its prosperity, it is as well that it should not be used too lavishly. The employment of petroleum for gas-making seems to be an advance of great importance from many points of view.

TREASURE-SEEKING IN FRANCE AT THE PRESENT DAY.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

CYNICAL philosophers will tell you that undetected insanity prevails largely throughout the human race, and, indeed, that in every great gathering of men the insane element predominates, in most cases undiscovered save by those whose interests become involved by the visions of their insanity. They will tell you, moreover, that aberration of brain has its own peculiar field of action, displaying itself under different forms according to the times and seasons.

In France the national insanity became universal under the form of treasure-seeking; and while the mania lasted the mind of every man belonging to the upper and middle classes of the French people was bent on the discovery of hidden treasure.

In a country like France, where for nearly a century revolution and war had alternately placed in jeopardy the property of individuals as well as the resources of the government, the reliance placed on concealment of wealth was greater than that inspired by the financial securities offered by the State.

Some Parisians are actually kept from wandering by conviction that there is hidden treasure behind the walls, or beneath the flooring, or in the chimney-nook, or under the roof.

'Why go to California when gold in greater quantity than can be found in that country lies under the Paris pavement beneath our feet? More gold could be brought to the surface by a few strokes of the pickaxe than by the labour of a whole army of diggers in California.'

You are told that during the numberless sieges to which Paris has been subjected, and the internal revolutions it has undergone, there exists not a cellar or a garret but has become the receptacle of some part of the immense riches accumulated in religious houses and old families. There is, perhaps, nothing irrational in the supposition that in the good old times when convents were made the depositories not only of the secrets of the aristocracy, but of the family jewels likewise, instances must have occurred wherein these deposits were buried and remain undiscovered, together with the treasure of the confraternity. But human folly has of late years exalted this rational possibility into dazzling certainty. Every means is now resorted to, and more gold and precious time expended than the most valuable treasure could repay, in order to seize the secret which still resists discovery. 'While you of the matter-of-fact, plodding Anglo-Saxon race are toiling and broiling in Australia and California searching for gold, we gold-seekers of Paris find it here beneath our feet in the old quarters of the city round Notre Dame and the Hôtel de Ville, where gold is teeming in greater plenty than amid the rocky boulders of California or beneath the soil of Ballarat,' said Ducasse, the great treasure-seeker. As if to mock this feverish and never-ceasing chase, not one of the great traditional treasures—of which four are believed to exist—has been yet brought to light, although now and then some token is vouchsafed of their real existence. From time to time, for instance, the tradition of the famous treasure buried by Napoleon's order on his hurried departure from the Tuileries before Waterloo, is justified by the turning up in all parts of the palace garden of gold pieces and silver crowns. The boles of the elm-trees down the middle alley of the garden were all marked with hieroglyphic signs, which, ceasing at certain points, began again on the lime-trees of the Terrace of the Feuillans. But the elm-tree where these signs began and the lime-tree on which they ended have been uprooted and the soil all about them turned over without avail. Then, during the

laying out of the Bois de Boulogne, great interest was excited by the fencing off of a portion of the wood close to the Pré Catelan, and the ransacking of this small spot for a month, under the superintendence of a government officer; while crowds waited anxiously outside the line to see one of the forty workmen strike upon the golden deposit confidently believed to have been buried there by Fouché, Duke of Otranto. The hoard is actually calculated as part of the family wealth.

No wonder that the influence of Satan is supposed to be connected with operations of this kind! The vanity of human wishes in this respect was illustrated in 1845 by the contemptuous giving up of a few miserable trifles by the demon evidently appointed to guard the 'Great Treasure of Gourdon.' This treasure, which tradition reports to be one of the most important of all those yet to be discovered, has existed from the time of King Clovis, who died A.D. 511! The chronicle of all the wealth buried in the cemetery of the convent at Gourdon (dep. Lot) still exists, together with a long list of articles in gold and silver, in rubies and emeralds and pearls. The convent was sacked and pillaged by the Normans, and the treasurer, who had buried the plate and jewels of all the religious houses under the same abbot, was murdered in his attempt to escape to the feudal seigneur of Gourdon with the crosier of the Lord Abbot. 'The head of the crosier was of solid gold,' says the credulous old chronicler more than a century later, 'and the rubies with which it was studded of such uncommon size that at one single blow the soldier who tore it from the monk's grasp, using it as a weapon, beat in his brains as with a sledge-hammer.' This was naturally sufficient to excite the hungry appetites of the treasure-seekers. Not merely during the Middle Ages was the hunt resumed from time to time; but from the later days of the reign of Louis Quatorze until the Revolution, well-authenticated tradition tells us of uninterrupted search being carried on in the ruined cemetery of the Abbey of Gourdon, but without effect. Not till 1842 was the search abandoned as hopeless. The opinion of geologists and engineers had been formally pronounced against all idea of success. No sooner had all interest ceased concerning this treasure, than, as if by the diabolical mockery of the fiends who had doubtless been often evoked in former days to make the treasure visible, the first sign vouchsafed during all these centuries to render its mere existence certain startled the world once more. One summer afternoon a village girl, driving her cows home from grazing on the once-fat pastures of the abbey lands, was overtaken by a sudden shower, and took shelter in a hollow place scooped out in a sandbank to preserve the tools of one of the workmen repairing the road. The place was low, and the girl had to sit in a crouching posture to keep her feet dry. Finding, however, that she kept sliding out into the road as the sand yielded beneath her weight, in order to steady herself she placed her feet firmly against the heap of earth which had accumulated at the side of the little cavern, when, to her great surprise, the whole mass gave way, and out rolled from amid the rubbish a portion of the long-buried 'Treasure of Gourdon'! It consisted of a salver, paten, and flagon with

its stand; the whole of solid gold of the purest kind, richly although rudely chased, and studded with emeralds and rubies. These articles were brought to Paris and duly advertised for sale by auction; but the government wisely became the purchaser, and they now ornament the museum of the Bibliothèque, having once more set the treasure-seekers hard at work at their old haunts in the valley of Gourdon. Here they have been proceeding ever since with renewed hope and vigour, lured on by this one *proof* of the inevitable success which *must* sooner or later attend their efforts.

Next came the reported discovery made by the Abbé Desgenettes in the presbytery-house of the Petits Pères of a vast treasure, amounting in value to several millions of francs. Although the report was most strenuously contradicted by the Abbé and also by his friends, yet no persuasion can ever induce the lower orders of the Paris population to believe that the immense sums of money which the Abbé Desgenettes dispensed with such profusion amongst the poor had their source elsewhere than in the cellars of the presbytery of the Petits Pères, when these were dug up to allow of the water-pipes being laid through them. The vast charities of the Abbé Desgenettes, while causing him to be venerated as a saint, yet drew down upon him the suspicion of the very people he relieved; they reviled as a wizard the very man they revered for the manner in which he applied his wealth.

The old presbytery-house of the Petits Pères was always looked upon with a certain dread. It stands in a dark, damp corner of the square, with a projecting upper story, beneath which the beggars and cripples of the church-porch are wont to take shelter from the sun.

'The Abbé Desgenettes was poor until the cellars of the presbytery-house had undergone this digging and delving by order of the municipality. The Abbé Desgenettes was a learned man—a very learned man—and must, consequently, have been able to discover hidden treasure by means of his Latin books.'

All this was so clear to the recipients of his bounty that it was in vain to argue that the parish of the Petits Pères, poor and insignificant until the completion of the Bourse, had grown suddenly the wealthiest in all Paris after that event. The proof given of the thirty masses a day said in the church, mostly commanded by rich families (who would pay for them in the most princely manner at the rate of one and two hundred francs each), was still insufficient to convince the people that the black art had not been resorted to in order to obtain this sudden influx of wealth. But the Abbé, himself undertaking his own defence, gallantly preached a most eloquent and witty sermon on the subject, and at last brought conviction to the minds of his congregation that other resources had been opened to him besides those of buried treasure.

One of his arguments was conclusive. The Petits Pères were not a rich order; they were begging friars, and could not possibly possess any buried treasure. The Abbé's reputation was restored, and the scrupulous poor, who even in their most abject poverty had refused to receive the Abbé's alms in specie lest it might prove to be 'devil's coin' and bring a curse, now came to make the *amende honorable* and to beg the dole in

money instead of bread. All was going right again, when lo! the buildings of the old convent of the Petits Pères were ordered to be pulled down to make way for the new Mairie. In digging the new foundation, two of the workmen shovelling the earth were observed to pause in their work; the carter jumped down to ascertain the cause of the delay, and, to his amazement, found one of the diggers lying senseless amongst the mould and rubbish, while the other was eagerly gathering up the silver coins which lay scattered in heaps around him. In digging the workmen had come upon a large leather bag, which had burst when they attempted to drag it forth, and sent out into the trench a miraculous shower of silver crowns. The blow given by the strong man was meant to establish his right to the treasure, and he was filling his pockets with the intention of decamping when the discovery was made. Justice sent both men to prison for intent to defraud the government, and their share of the adventure ended there.

But the evil day began once more with the study in the *Journal des Débats* upon the wealth of the Begging Friars, declaring that formerly in France, and to this day all over Italy, the various orders of Begging Friars are the wealthiest of all, their rule having been always to garner up and never to disburse. Thus the system of the Franciscans was invariably that of the 'cubic metre.' This 'cubic metre' consists of a stone bin measuring a metre square in every sense. Into this the begging brothers deposited the contents of their bags on returning from their begging expeditions. When one 'cubic metre' was filled to the brim it was sealed up and left till its turn arrived to be broken open for loans on interest to friendly sovereigns, for aiding governments in the building and adornment of churches, and for the foundation of new houses of the order. Much difference existed in the wealth of these Begging Friars; the treasury of the Franciscans was supposed to possess many of these 'cubic metres' full of gold; while that of the Petits Pères, the richest of all, had a long line of 'cubic metres'—filled, not with gold, but with silver—reaching underground from the prior's house to the church. This, combined with the finding of silver coin, was more than sufficient to re-establish the gossips in their belief of magical practices on the part of the Abbé Desgenettes.

It was towards the end of the reign of Napoleon the Third that the greatest modern adept in the art of treasure-seeking died in the full belief that he was on the point of discovering the 'Master Treasure' (*le Maître Trésor*) known to exist amongst the ruins of the ancient Belgian Abbey of Orval. M. Ducasse, a builder by profession, had realised a large fortune by government contracts; but every farthing was swallowed up in the expenses incurred in exploring the vaults of the haunted old abbey. There invaluable treasure is said to have been buried by the monks when driven out; and the single word of mystery, *NEMO*, carved on the tomb of the last abbot, has been thought to give the key to the cabalistic letters cut singly with evident intention upon all the others.

During this period the magnetisers of Paris, then in full career, were astonished by the discovery of the almost appalling powers of clair-

voyance exhibited by a young girl of the Rue des Diaires, a small, dirty street behind Notre Dame. The girl had been originally taken from the Enfants Trouvés by a good, motherly, hard-working woman, who had treated her with great fondness. At about the age of fourteen the most singular symptoms had made themselves visible in the girl, which so alarmed her adoptive mother that she took her to the Hôtel Dieu for treatment. There the doctors and students of the establishment were astounded by the display of a symptom perfectly new to medical practice. As the girl lay in bed, with her eyes closed and the curtains drawn to exclude the light, she would tell the name and history of every person approaching her, and actually repeat aloud what was passing in his or her mind at the time. Many were the jests uttered against the doctors and *Scieurs de Charité* when it was ascertained that, weary with the constant fatigue incidental to the girl's apparently incurable disease, they had consented to give up the cure into the hands of a great magnetising doctor, whom they had hitherto laughed at. But it was not to treat the girl's catalepsy that he bargained with the adoptive mother for the sole exploitation of the occult powers of the patient.

It was just about this time that treasure-seeking was for the third time since the Revolution at its height, and the doctor beheld at once the immense resource which his science could draw from the extraordinary powers of the clairvoyante. The doctor was employed by a well-known capitalist; and together this worthy pair set about turning the poor girl's infirmity to profit. *La blonde Camille*, who was remarkable for her beauty, gradually became the property, as it were, of the doctor, and was condemned to the strictest seclusion and the most ethereal regime. So entirely were her faculties at length under the control of her magnetiser that the state known in the jargon of magnetism as the 'Golden Vision' became at last procurable by a single gesture of the master's hand! No sooner was she asleep than by his will he could transport her in imagination to a hidden treasure of ducats, louis d'ors, and silver crowns. For weeks the treasure itself was all that was beheld by the clairvoyante; its place of concealment still remained a mystery. The most cruel extremities were resorted to in order to force from the poor child a description of the exact spot where the riches were concealed—alternate excitement and exhaustive persuasion and menace, until night by night success drew nearer. But the regime to which poor Camille, at all times weak and fragile, had been submitted had reduced her to the most transparent shadow. It was evident that death was staring her in the face unless relieved from the fearful work to which she was compelled. At length one morning, just at dawn, after having been all night under magnetic influence, the veil which had concealed the place where lay the treasure, always present to the poor girl's dreaming eye, seemed to be gradually dropping away! The vaults of a ruined abbey were solemnly described; the long line of sculptured tombs brought one by one before the fancy of the greedy and breathless listeners. She saw them all; she read the hieroglyphics upon each tomb; she passed slowly down the grim avenue of death, and, exhausted at last with the long dreary walk,

sank on the shoulder of the magnetiser, who, trembling with the greed of lucre, plied her with stronger and stronger doses of the magnetising influence. But lower and lower sank the girl, until her thin, attenuated form had reached the floor and lay at his feet, stiff and rigid as a corpse. Presently the girl's lips slowly open, and a low whispering sound is heard. The very heart of the magnetiser ceased to beat! He stooped down lower still and placed his ear close to the girl's mouth, whence the breath came cold and icy with each murmuring word: 'Ah! here it is at last. Now I shall be left to rest, for it is found. Look—N—E—M—O—that is the word I have been seeking for so long. How cunning that device upon the Prince Abbot's tomb!'

The mystery of that talismanic word had long been the theme of speculation amongst the practitioners of occult science, and there was no need to tell the doctor *where* it was sculptured, or for what purpose it had been imprinted there. It needed great care to awaken the girl, whose frail breath of life had been stretched to its utmost limit, and she was an unusual length of time in coming to herself. But no rest was allowed her, no mercy shown. Before the sun had risen a *chaîsse de poste* left Paris as fast as the gallop of five frisky *percherons* could convey it to the frontier; and before many days had elapsed the mystery of that magic word had been rendered clear to the magnetiser and his friend, while another word of mystery more awful still had been revealed to the poor *somnambule* herself. It is known for certain that, about a week after the departure of the clairvoyante with the doctor and his confederate, the girl's mother received a letter, written by the doctor himself, and dated from a seaport town in Holland, wherein was reported in very feeling terms the death of the *blonde Camille*, and bidding the woman go immediately to the ruined Abbey of Orval (which is in the Ardennes district of Belgium), where her daughter would be found lying on the last tomb, reckoning from east to west, in the vault of the Abbot Princes of the monastery. A bill for the expenses of the journey drawn upon the house of Perregaux was enclosed in the letter, and a deed drawn up in due form before a notary was also forwarded, ensuring to the woman a yearly income sufficient for her support. The letter concluded with the assurance that all attempt to discover the doctor would be vain, as he was, under an assumed name, about to seek a new existence in a foreign land. The poor woman lost no time in verifying the assertion of the letter; and on the tomb of the Abbot of Orval lay the corpse of the poor clairvoyante.

No sign of violence was visible, and the opinion established itself that the clairvoyante, put to sleep upon the tomb, had been forgotten when the two treasure-seekers, in their eagerness to follow her directions in search of the booty, had left her to descend the stair. A bottle of restorative cordial, a sponge, and a small phial of ammonia were found close beside her—serving to prove that means had been resorted to, although too late, to bring her back again to life. The pick-axe and spade brought by the two friends into the vault still lay there; but it was evident there had been no need to use them—the door of the tomb, hanging loosely on its rusty hinges, had required but small effort to force it open. The riflers had

descended the mouldering stone steps which led to the vault where the coffin of the Prince Abbot lay upon its iron grating; but here no certain trace remained of their visit, for at the extremity of the vault part of the wall had given way, and so escape was easy into the wood behind the abbey. Conjecture is free to this hour as to that mysterious adventure—whether the treasure-seekers carried away any portion of the wealth of the Abbots of Orval, or whether, alarmed at the catastrophe of which the poor girl had been the victim, they had fled from justice. Conjecture has, of course, preferred the former supposition, for the doctor's son—a boy when these events occurred—afterwards lived in Paris in the receipt of a splendid income, while the stockbroker, his father's partner, became one of the greatest of the moneyed men upon the Bourse. Peculiarities which marked the life of the stockbroker gave a colouring to suspicion; the rich man could never sleep unless the whole of the wax-tapers in the chandeliers were illumined, and often at the château where he died hired singers and players were brought from Paris to charm the hideous night away.

It is not to be supposed that elements so full of interest and horror should have been left unexploited by novelists. Four or five stirring romances and melodramas have introduced the catastrophe, and the whole plot of one popular novel turns upon the great and sudden wealth acquired by the doctor from amongst the tombs of the ruined Abbey of Orval. Even since the death of Ducasse another permission to search the ruins of Orval has been accorded to a Franco-Belgian company.

HER LOOK.

TIME may set his fingers there,
Fix the smiles that curve about
Her winsome mouth, and touch her hair,
Put the curves of youth to rout;
But the 'something' God put there,
That which drew me to her first,
Not the imps of pain and care,
Not all sorrow's fiends accurst,
Can kill the look that God put there.

Something beautiful and rare,
Nothing common can destroy;
Not all the leaden load of care,
Not all the dross of earth's alloy;
Better than all fame or gold,
True as only God's own truth,
It is something all hearts hold
Who have loved once in their youth.

That sweet look her face doth hold
Thus will ever be to me;
Joy may all her pinions fold,
Care may come and misery;
Through the days of murk and shine,
Though the roads be foul or fair,
I will see through love's glad eyne
That sweet look that God put there.

W. W. CAMPBELL.

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BLACKWOODS: THE HISTORY OF A PUBLISHING HOUSE.

THE early years of the present century witnessed a great and startling revival of literature, and they also witnessed a revolution in the trade concerned with the output and distribution of literary wares. The bookseller had previously been indistinguishable from the publisher, for the very good reason that he *was* the publisher. Every one knows the formula on the title-pages of last century: 'Printed by So-and-so for Messrs Brown, Paternoster Row; Jones, Poultry; Robinson, Fleet Street; M'Tavish, Edinburgh; O'Leary, Dublin,' and half-a-score of others besides. Few ventures were undertaken by solitary individuals. It was the booksellers of London as a body who persuaded Dr Johnson to undertake his most valuable and permanent work, *The Lives of the Poets*; and no doubt the system had the advantage of dividing what Mr Murray, the Emperor of the trade, always spells the 'risque.' Whether it was better than the system which succeeded it need not be inquired; for it may be assumed that each generation discovers and employs the machinery which suits it best. But if any one takes an interest in the transition from the old order to the new, he will derive ample material and assistance for studying it, to say nothing of extreme enjoyment in the process, from the recently published 'Annals' of the publishing house of Blackwood (*William Blackwood and his Sons*. By Mrs Oliphant. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1897).

That the founder of the house was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth may safely be inferred from the fact that he was apprenticed to a firm of booksellers at the age of fourteen. But from the very outset of his career he seems to have imbibed the best traditions of the trade in Edinburgh, as represented by Creech and Smellie, and to have taken a keen interest in the contents of the books which it was his concern to buy and sell. Not, indeed, that he neglected the

practical side of his business; for by the time he was twenty-eight he was able to set up for himself, and in the following year (1805) to marry. He was among the lucky speculators in that lottery. Miss Steuart of Carfin, for that was her name, appears to have been a lady of great native shrewdness, and of a happy, if sometimes caustic, wit, which descended to her daughter, Miss Isabella, who has not yet been dead a twelvemonth. Mrs Blackwood doubtless objected—or pretended to object—to many harmless things, such as authors in general, or the civic banquets which her husband when he entered the Town Council felt bound as a matter of duty to attend. But she was an affectionate and devoted wife, for all she began her letters to her husband 'My dear Blackwood,' and ended them 'yours truly.' Such was the fashion of a reserved and undemonstrative age. It cannot be doubted that in his private life William Blackwood was eminently happy; and even Mrs Oliphant, who excelled in delineating the natural affections, never drew a domestic interior with greater sympathy and charm than that of the comfortable villa at Newington, where were growing up two daughters, and the seven sons for whom Mrs Blackwood had found it no light task to discover names.

Greatly, however, as Mr Blackwood prospered in his bookselling, and high as his reputation became for a thorough knowledge of his craft, he always aspired to something still higher. His prime ambition was to secure a great author with whom to make a great hit, and thus to approve himself worthy of the confidence which Murray had bestowed in appointing him his agent in 1811. If he envied Murray's superior financial resources it was because he saw that the London publisher had been able to make of his business 'a liberal profession.' It is curious to watch the play of these two instincts throughout the whole of his career, and indeed throughout that of his sons: the aptitude for business, and the enthusiastic appreciation of good writing. The cynic may scoff, and hint that the latter was never allowed

free scope when brought into competition with the former. But the cynic for once would be wrong. Even the most businesslike of his letters demonstrate how genuine was his attachment to considerations of a loftier order; and only those who consider that publishers (unlike all other men) exist to make a living not for themselves but for others could describe him as sordid or mercenary. The theory that what is to be aimed at is the mutual advantage of author and publisher permeates his correspondence.

Like most ambitious men he suffered disappointments; and one of them was exceptionally cruel. After considerable negotiation he had secured the *Tales of My Landlord* through the agency of James Ballantyne, and he reckoned it 'one of the proudest things in my life to have attained it.' But his triumph was short-lived. It is unnecessary to discuss the motives which prompted Scott to transfer the fifth edition to Constable in a most unceremonious manner; it is enough to say that William Blackwood was none too handsomely used in the matter. His hopes, thus dashed to the ground, were, however, revived with the revival of his *Magazine*, which was destined ere long to realise them. In the course of a long existence, the house of Blackwood has ushered into the world many works of sterling merit. But it was not the excellent and learned M'Crie's *Life of John Knox*, nor even Miss Ferrier's witty and vivacious *Marriage*, which launched the publishing department of the firm on a career of prosperity; nor yet was it Alison's *History* which filled the sails with a propitious breeze, though at one time, as John Blackwood wrote to his brothers, twenty people a week seem to have said to themselves 'Let's have a set.' These functions were reserved for 'Maga.'

The first six months of the *Magazine's* existence could scarcely have been duller had the editors been secretly in Constable's pay. It was not till they had been got rid of, and a couple of young advocates called in, whom the publisher no doubt intended himself to supervise and keep in order, that the fun began. Nowadays, perhaps, a 'Chaldee Manuscript,' or anything in the least like it, would not be a very good 'send-off' for a periodical that hoped to see long life and many days. Amazingly clever as it is, and dexterously as it penetrates the weak points in everybody's armour, its personalities are appalling. We, too, have our share of personal journalism. Duchesses vie with dairymaids, and dukes with dustmen in confiding to a certain section of the press the most intimate particulars about their hearths and homes. But hostile personal journalism has almost ceased to exist, and one would have to grope in very unsavoury quarters indeed to find a periodical which attempted to throw ridicule on political or literary foes by twitting them with their physical infirmities or imperfections. Nor could any one in Lockhart's rank of life produce a second *Peter's Letters* without a practical certainty of forfeiting his position in society. Even in 1817, when the public was accustomed to incredible license and ferocity of attack, Henry Mackenzie, the 'Man of Feeling,' and Tytler the historian, were shocked by the 'Chaldee Manuscript.' But the storm blew over, though it was the precursor of many another; and Blackwood wrote to Murray that, on the

whole, he had gained more than he had lost by it. One step, indeed, he had taken which illustrates both the soundness of his strategy and the artfulness of his tactics. 'Get Scott,' implored Lockhart, 'and you get everything.' The Magician was ever ready to help a lame dog over a stile; and his neutrality, and even active, though indirect, alliance were secured by the bait of offering William Laidlaw an engagement to write regularly in the *Magazine* on country affairs.

It was not for a few years after the first great escapade that the celebrated series of the *Noctes Ambrosianae* began, which long formed so admirable a medium for conveying to the public 'Maga's' 'criticism of life.' Their fame has rather obscured the unusual excellence which characterised much of the other contents of the *Magazine*, and which must have contributed materially to the very high position which it attained in the estimation not only of the literary world at large, but also of its very greatest men, like Coleridge, who, by-the-bye, had been the victim of one of its earliest and least justifiable onslaughts. But, though no one reads the *Noctes* now—or almost no one—and though at this distance of time they stand much in need of the interpreter whom Mr Croker, sitting in the scorum's chair in London, professed to desiderate, a slight examination of their pages lends great support to the view that, by themselves, they might have won attention and success for any periodical. One may not always feel in tune with their exuberant hilarity and their boisterous humour; but one cannot read far without coming across something worth reading—some luminous piece of criticism wrapped up and concealed in a mighty sputter about trifles, some really amusing piece of whimsicality, some slight but vivid and invigorating sketch of outdoor life. It was never possible to distinguish the several hands which mixed the ingredients of the dish. Hogg unquestionably was one of the regular cooks, or at least kitchen-maids, to begin with; Maginn, that wild Irishman, catching up the tone and spirit of the publication with extraordinary versatility, often assisted in stirring the pot, and succeeded in landing Mr Blackwood in the Jury Court by means of a savage attack on Professor Leslie. Lockhart and Wilson, however, were the joint chefs, until Lockhart's regular contributions ceased in 1829, after which Wilson ruled the roast in solitary state. Other contributors sometimes attempted to don Christopher North's jacket, but they got little thanks for their pains. 'I had no wish,' writes the intensely vain, fundamentally kind-hearted, and temporarily crestfallen author of *Ten Thousand a Year*, in answer to a remonstrance from the editor, 'I had no wish to force myself into your caste, so to speak; but I erred in the simplicity of my heart, fancying, erroneously it would seem, that I could make my communication the more acceptable. I sincerely beg pardon, and will never offend in like manner again.'

The ingredients themselves were of the most miscellaneous description. The great net of the *Noctes* was cast wide and embraced everything in its sweep. It was kept constantly supplied with tit-bits of political and literary gossip from London by journalists like Alaric Attila Watts (alarming name!), whose letters are still good

reading, as well as by Lockhart when he had taken up the reins of the *Quarterly*. Nothing came amiss which could sharpen a weapon against a foe or add a laurel to the wreath destined for the brow of a friend. The habit of personal attack was, unfortunately, maintained. That it was amusing enough at times is perfectly true. Its best excuse was the goodness of the cause; for, so far as anything of the sort can be summarised, it would be accurate to say that one great aim of Christopher's teaching was the extinction of literary cliques and coteries and the abolition of what we call log-rolling. But the poor publisher must have had a most unpleasant time of it. He alone had to put up with the disagreeable consequences of his contributors' extravagances. While they exhorted him from a safe distance to be bold, to fear nothing, and, above all, on no account to disclose their names, to him fell the unenviable duty of soothing wounded feelings, of pacifying vindictiveness, and sometimes of paying for his 'lads' whistle. At the outset, when the editorship was 'in commission,' as it were, the 'Spenlow and Jorkins' game was given a trial. The editor was played off against the publisher and the publisher against the editor. But, as time went on, the editorship came more and more exclusively into the hands of the publisher, who, as he assumed the entire responsibility, not unnaturally preferred to have the entire control. This system he bequeathed to his sons, Alexander, Robert, and John; it is continued by his grandson; and probably every contributor has experienced the stern and unbending, though calm and unostentatious, nature of that autocracy. Mrs Oliphant herself speaks of it in accents whose sincerity is beyond all question; and scarcely an author, great or small, crosses her stage without pausing to bewail the ruthless mauling of his articles, and the relentless excision of his most beautiful passages, his most telling episodes, or his most cogent arguments. Interpolation, it should be said, the editor has never practised. That would have added injury to insult.

The young gentleman of mythology who rashly attempted to drive the chariot of the sun can scarcely have had a more difficult team to manage than Mr Blackwood. His contributors seemed to learn nothing and to forget nothing. Lockhart, indeed, was sobered by the duel in which his friend Christie killed John Scott of the *London Magazine*. Nay, so deep was he plunged in despondency that Mr Blackwood had to make the most piteous appeals to him to resume his post. But Wilson was well-nigh incorrigible; and one is at a loss to conjecture what pert and malicious spirit sometimes obtained possession of his intellect. His most outrageous performance was probably an absolutely unprovoked attack on Wordsworth, whose cause he had always stoutly championed, but whom he now pronounced to be 'one of the illustrious obscure,' while the *Excursion* was set down as 'the worst poem of any character in the English language.' Wilson's offence is aggravated and rendered more mysterious by the fact that very shortly before its commission he, in company with Scott and Lockhart, had enjoyed the hospitality of the inspired Stamp-master. In the same number he made an equally wanton onslaught on an Irish gentleman of philanthropic, or rather philozaic, but quite

harmless tendencies. His remorse at the immediate prospect of his curses coming home to roost, though no doubt expressed in characteristically exaggerated language, is far from being an edifying spectacle. It will not, of course, surprise the reader to learn that Wilson was as sensitive to adverse criticism as he was eager to dispense it. Henry Mackenzie, having composed his differences with 'Old Ebony,' had sent in a review of Wilson's *Lights and Shadows*. Harken to the Professor: 'I consider old M. to be the greatest nuisance that ever infested any magazine. . . . The whole article is loathsome, and gives me and Mrs W. the utmost disgust. It is sickening to see it in the *Magazine*. It is not that I can possibly be such an ass as to dislike criticism. [No author, to be sure, ever was!] But this is mere drivelling falsehood and misrepresentation.' He was absurdly touchy, too, in personal matters; and at some supposed coldness in Mr Blackwood's demeanour would write a long screed of expostulation, and wind up by begging that there might be no more allusions to the matter.

Apart altogether from his explosions, Wilson must have been a most trying contributor, none the less so that 'Maga' could not possibly have done without him. He was one of those who never do to-day what can be put off till to-morrow. A distrust of the punctuality of all authors and contributors became deeply and permanently rooted in the bosom of the firm. Conceive an editor's feelings at receiving the following cool epistle from his right-hand man at the moment of going to press, when perhaps a couple of sheets had been reserved blank for the eagerly-expected 'copy': 'However painful to myself, and I fear also to you, I am obliged to give up the attempt to do a *Noctes*. I have tried as earnestly as I could, and I cannot. My mind has been incapable of doing what it was my most anxious wish to do; and that being the case truly, it must be put up with, and nothing said on the subject except a hope that it will be otherwise next month, and any heaviness of this number redeemed then.' By dint of pertinacity on the part of the publisher and the printers' devils, the manuscript was generally made forthcoming, and somehow the number appeared; but if one such note was sent from Gloucester Place to George Street, a hundred were. Yet he, too, had his fits of work, when Mr Blackwood's soul was overjoyed, and when he was hailed as the animating spirit of the *Magazine*. 'Oh Professor, you will stand by the boys!' was Mrs Blackwood's touching appeal when they first met after her husband's death in 1834; and he did so right gallantly. That two men of such totally different temperaments and tastes as John Wilson and John Gibson Lockhart should have worked together with all but perfect harmony is, perhaps, the highest possible testimony to the genius, in his own line, of William Blackwood.

Another well-known literary character and supporter of the *Magazine*, who in the matter of causing the publisher untold suspense and anxiety closely resembled the Professor, was that volatile being, Thomas de Quincey. Mr Blackwood early secured the promise of his assistance; indeed, it used jocularly to be said that the enterprising editor was in the habit of inviting every fresh person whose acquaintance he made to write for 'ma Maga.' True to his

principle of getting the very best work out of every man, Mr Blackwood opens the correspondence with much encouragement and praise. 'I am so happy to receive anything from you,' he writes, 'that your two pages appear like the twenty-four of any one else; because, now that you are fairly begun, I feel confident that you will do justice to yourself. It was the knowing what you *could do* if you were once *resolved to do*, which made my repeated disappointments so mortifying to me. This is now all happily over; because, as the French say, the first step is the grand affair.' But soon the note changes into, 'I must tell you frankly at once that your mode of furnishing articles will neither answer your own purpose nor mine. For instance, this article which you have not yet finished, you positively promised to have with me complete on Tuesday by two o'clock;' and so forth. De Quincey in reply 'chaffed' the publisher, told him that his last number had been a dreary collection of dullness, and foresaw that the entire weight of supporting the *Magazine* must rest on his shoulders. Back came the prompt and withering retort: 'When I apply to you to be the Atlas of my *Magazine*, it will be time enough for you to undertake the burthen. And in the meantime I must beg leave to say that if you cannot send me anything better than the "English Lakes," it will be quite unnecessary for you to give yourself any further trouble about the *Magazine*.' Unfortunate De Quincey! So lavish in promises of amendment; so punctilious in inquiring the very latest moment up to which his articles could be received; so fertile in excuses for invariably being a good deal later! There he stands, revealed in his own letters; and it may here be remarked that the work is peculiarly rich in interesting correspondence of all sorts. There are young John Blackwood's gossip letters from the branch in Pall Mall; there are letters from innumerable literary men, of which Maginn's perhaps are the most (consciously) entertaining; there are William Blackwood's letters to his son—William the second, a cadet in India—letters such as few sons are fortunate enough to receive from a father; and there are the letters of Lockhart, which Mr Lang had not the advantage of perusing when he wrote his *Life* of that great writer and good man.

For good he may now be emphatically pronounced as well as great, even by those who have hitherto been sceptical. These volumes show him in the most favourable light. William Blackwood had been the benefactor of his youth, and Lockhart remembered it to the end. With the possible exception of the period of depression to which we have referred, he always shared to the full the curious feeling of almost chivalrous devotion which 'Maga' alone perhaps among all periodicals has inspired in her contributors; and so far from breaking off the connection when he moved to London, he continued to send supplies of material for use in the *Noctes*—nay, from time to time wrote a whole *Noctes* himself. He, too, when William Blackwood died, rallied to the aid of 'the boys,' and his kindness to John in London was past telling. 'I never saw him more cordial and amusing,' writes John Blackwood on one occasion; 'he has abandoned his old practice of giving one two fingers to shake.' The little trait

was doubtless significant of much. To the day of his death, no incident occurred to mar the harmony of a relationship which had subsisted for close on forty years, and which was eminently honourable to both sides.

Little or nothing has been said of Hogg, or Coleridge, or Warren, or Lytton, or Hamley, or Aytoun, or George Eliot, or a hundred other celebrities, great and small, who play their part in Mrs Oliphant's pages. It must not be supposed that the interest evaporates with William Blackwood's death. On the contrary, nothing could be more engrossing than the picture of the sons carrying on the traditions of their father, as other sons have done, and enlisting new recruits for the *Magazine* of which he had been so proud. Nor could anything be more charming than Mrs Oliphant's account—given with true modesty and tact—of her own early connection with the house. The whereabouts of these and of many other points will be found in the copious index. But the book is essentially as much for reading through as for consulting. 'It must indeed be a great treat to you,' was Mr Blackwood's favourite phrase about 'Maga' in writing to his son, the Major, in India. It will be surprising if this chronicle of the firm he founded does not prove 'a great treat' to many readers.

A NIGHT IN AUSTIN FRIARS.

CHAPTER IV.—CONCLUSION.

SOME days went by. Shuttleworth had started off post-haste for Cairo; and no tidings of him or of Gilbert Ringham had since reached Charterhouse Square of which Helen had been made acquainted. It might be, the girl repeatedly thought, that her father knew more about the purloining of the foreign bonds than he was ready to admit. Her father and Ralph Shuttleworth had sat late into the night debating. There had been no apparent inclination to include her in their conference, and her pride deterred her from exhibiting a sign of the almost overpowering curiosity which the situation had roused. It was clear that neither her father nor Shuttleworth shared Mr Grinold's belief that she had a head for affairs. She was deeply pained. Not because she had been ignored; Helen Warrener was not sensitive on that score; she could afford to laugh at their narrow-minded attitude; but what troubled her—had troubled her ever since Shuttleworth had left London—was the dread lest Ringham should be too hastily judged. She had felt more drawn towards him than she would have willingly confessed. An intuitive sense of trust in him had been awakened. The report that he had absconded had naturally perplexed her, but it had not shaken her confidence in the man. He had occupied her thoughts almost unceasingly ever since.

She had crossed over into the garden one afternoon. She wished to think—away from her father, whose despondency about the lost fortune deeply oppressed her—think in peace and quietness for a brief half-hour. She walked to and fro under the limes, pondering the situation for the hundredth time. The trees were nearly bared of their foliage now; the dead leaves were chasing each other along the pathway and dancing pirouettes about her when an occasional gust of wind swept

round the square. Of a sudden Helen became aware of a tall, broad-shouldered man in a fur coat standing at the gate.

'Mr Ringham!' She stepped a few paces from the railings and stared at him with unfeigned surprise. 'You—you in London!'

'May I come in? I must speak with you at once. You can spare me a moment?'

She unhesitatingly opened the gate; and for a while they walked to and fro in silence. Glancing up furtively into his face, she noticed an anxious, tired look; and she began to fear lest he had come to appeal to her—even to plead her intercession for mercy. But she felt reassured by the first words he spoke.

'I have returned to London—I have travelled night and day,' he said, 'to ask you one question. Your answer is of the most vital importance to me.'

'What is it?'

'I've been told, Miss Warrener, that Mr Shuttleworth and your father have utterly condemned my explanation,' said Ringham, 'about the robbery of the foreign bonds. They regard it as a trumped-up, ridiculous story. My question is simply this: do you share their opinion?'

Helen looked bewilderingly at Ringham. 'I've not been given the chance. I was led to believe that—that you had absconded,' she said; 'had carried off the bonds. I knew nothing. I've been kept in ignorance of the whole affair.'

'As I thought,' and Ringham took an oblong envelope from his pocket. 'Will you read this? It's a copy of the letter which I despatched to Cairo on the morning upon which the calamity happened. I left a duplicate of this at the "Two Swans," in a sealed packet addressed to Mr Shuttleworth, before quitting the hotel.'

Helen took the letter. She was about to read it, when a thought came into her head, and she looked up. 'Why did you quit the hotel so suddenly?'

'I waited until the last moment,' said he. 'I had hardly time left to catch the mail-train.'

'To Cairo?'

'Yes. I determined to return,' said Ringham, 'and put myself in the hands of my directors. I was so worried and perplexed, Miss Warrener, that I could not rest in London. In a moment of desperation—I can't tell you what mental agony I suffered—it did enter into my head to take to flight. My instant return to Cairo seemed my only safeguard. I left the matter in Mr Shuttleworth's hands, as Mr Grinold's lawyer, and I looked for fair-play at least.'

She now hastened to read the letter. Ringham had lucidly set forth how he had come to be locked in the house in Austin Friars; how he had found a lodging in a room on the top floor; and how, upon waking at daybreak, the bundle of foreign bonds had disappeared. There was an intensely concentrated look upon her face while she read.

She folded the letter presently, and stood for some moments in deep abstraction. 'About what hour,' she said, glancing at last into Ringham's face—'about what hour did you reach Austin Friars?'

'Shortly after six o'clock.'

'After six? Then it was I who locked you in!'

'Yes. I saw you from the staircase window,' he said—'saw you standing under the lamp. But—but—'

'Mr Ringham,' Helen suddenly interposed, 'I think that I've got a clue.'

'A clue to this mystery?'

'Yes! Wait for me only five minutes,' and she hastened towards the gate. 'I'll not be longer.'

In a little parlour, known to Helen as 'father's study' ever since she was a child, John Warrener sat brooding over the fire. He had ceased to take things in a hopeful light. His cheery manner was gone. He was dressed in an ill-fitting suit of black, which increased his appearance of gloom. His face had already lost some of its roundness, and the wrinkles had deepened about his forehead and at the corners of his eyes. He had stood beside Anthony Grinold's grave as sole mourner a few days since; and then he had returned home to wonder what would become of himself—how it would now be possible to keep a roof over their heads; and this problem had been haunting his thoughts incessantly ever since.

'Father, where have you put the keys?'

Warrener looked round startled. He had not heard his daughter come in. 'What is it? What keys?'

'Mr Grinold's keys—the keys of Austin Friars. Please give them to me at once.'

Warrener shook his head with emphasis. 'I promised Shuttleworth not to let them out of my hands.'

Helen's eyes flashed angrily. 'Do you mistrust me?'

'No; but Shuttleworth—'

'Don't try my patience, father! You must know,' said the girl, 'that I shouldn't ask for the keys unless I had a strong motive.'

'What is it?'

'I can't stop to discuss that now,' was Helen's reply. 'You should have taken me into your confidence—you and Mr Shuttleworth—before he went off to Cairo. I might, perhaps, have saved him the journey.'

'What do you mean?'

'I've learnt everything about Mr Ringham's flight, as you called it. I've read the letter which he wrote to the bank explaining how he had been robbed'—

'Ah, come now!' Warrener ejaculated. 'Was ever a more ridiculous letter written than that?'

'There's nothing ridiculous about it.'

'What?'

'I believe in Mr Ringham,' Helen insisted undauntedly.

Warrener looked up. 'Shuttleworth was right. He said you'd side with the man. And now you can understand why we didn't confide in you. But how came the letter to get into *your* hands?'

'Give me the keys. I may tell you then.'

Warrener slowly rose from his chair. Something in Helen's look and manner had at last impelled him to yield. He crossed to his desk, unlocked the drawer, and took out a heavy bunch of keys.

'Now'—and he placed them reluctantly in her hand—'who showed that letter to you?'

'Mr Ringham. He has returned to London,' said Helen. 'I left him only a minute ago.'

'Where—where is he?'

His hand was on the door; but his daughter stopped him, and said in a tone of irresistible appeal: 'Father, Mr Grinold trusted me; can't you?'

When Helen rejoined him, Ringham observed that her cheeks were flushed and her eyes glistened with suppressed excitement. Each time he had looked into her face she appeared to him more beautiful.

'Now, Mr Ringham, will you come with me?'

They walked for a while in silence, threading their way through narrow streets and winding alleys.

'Where are you taking me, Miss Warrener?'

'Didn't I tell you? To Mr Grinold's house.'

'Where is that?'

'In Austin Friars,' said Helen.

'Austin Friars?'

They came abruptly upon the old square. Ringham's eye at once sought the mansion with the twin-doors and double flight of steps under the shell-shaped canopy. The doors were closed, and upon most of the windows of both houses he read the words 'To Let'—'To Let,' in fresh white paint. Helen led the way up the steps, and unfastened a padlocked door on the left-hand side—the door upon which there was no name or number.

'Is it possible?' said Ringham, in blank surprise. 'Did Mr Grinold live here?'

'Yes, all his life,' said Helen; 'and his father and grandfather before him.'

'If I had only known!'

Helen stepped into the hall, and Ringham followed. He looked curiously about him. This hall and the staircase resembled the hall and staircase in the other house in every detail. Helen, interpreting his look, remarked:

'About a hundred years ago this house and the house next door formed one big mansion. It was split into two, as you see it, by Mr Grinold's father. His object, I believe, was to sell this portion. The idea was conceived at a moment of financial embarrassment; but the firm of Grinold struggled successfully out of its plight, as many a firm has done before, and the idea was abandoned. Will you come upstairs?'

When they reached the first-floor landing Helen unlocked a door, and they found themselves in a large and lofty room with three great windows looking out upon Austin Friars. The room was a library, and the massive oaken furniture matched well with the dark panelled walls. Helen drew back the heavy folds of curtain from one of the windows, and the deepening twilight looked in upon them.

'Before going a step farther,' said Helen, with her hand upon a high-backed arm-chair, 'let me tell you what gave me the impulse to bring you here. The truth is, your letter has put a strange notion into my head, and I want to hear what you think of it. It may seem ludicrous to you, and perhaps it may prove so. We shall see.'

Ringham, who had commenced to pace restlessly up and down the room, stopped and looked eagerly towards her.

'What will you think of me, Mr Ringham,' she said, 'if I venture to suggest that the man who took from your valise those foreign bonds was none other than Anthony Grinold himself?'

He stood speechless, too amazed to comment upon her bold surmise.

'Would you credit it?' she went on. 'Can you conceive how such a thing could come about?'

No? And yet to me it seems almost as plain as though I had been an eye-witness to it. I knew Mr Grinold's character so well. I am going to surprise you. Until the night upon which he woke me out of my sleep in the top room with the cobwebbed doors he was a wretched hoarder of gold. My unlooked-for presence there—my discovery of his secret—seemed to change the man's very nature. I'll not attempt to explain the fact. He had a distinct personality, a will-power that was never surpassed. He received me in this very room a day or two later—greeted me as though we had been friends for years. It was a memorable meeting. He related many interesting things about the old house of Grinold, gave me my first lesson in finance, and incidentally mentioned that all his money was lying idle at the bank. His meaning was only too clear to me. He wished me to understand that a ruling passion had been conquered, and the subject was never again hinted at between us as long as he lived.'

Ringham listened as if spell-bound. By her beautiful presence, her admirable wit and sympathy, she had directed Anthony Grinold's avaricious thoughts into a healthier channel. A human interest had sprung up to inspire and sustain a nobler impulse. It was with breathless suspense that he waited to learn more from her of this strange being; for his imagination was already whirling him a dozen different ways in search of a solution of the mystery that Helen Warrener was slowly unfolding before his mind's eye.

'You can now understand, perhaps,' she said, 'what mental torture Mr Grinold must have suffered at times. He was like a confirmed drunkard who has resolutely turned his face against drink. It often pained me to look at him. He seemed to be wrestling with some unseen force. He never knew how intently I observed him—never knew how much I pitied his weakness and wondered at his strength. He thought me deeply absorbed at such moments in his financial schemes. And so the day came round—that unlucky day of the fog—upon which he looked for you. That was the most terrible day of all—a day of real torment, I almost think. But you will presently be able to judge for yourself and draw your own conclusions.'

The twilight was fading fast from this sombre room; some parts of it lay already in deep shadow, and the pictures on the walls had become almost blotted out. And now Ringham perceived that a low arm-chair that stood beside the fireless hearth—upon which Helen frequently bent her eyes while speaking—must be the chair in which the financier had habitually sat. It wrought so strong an impress on his mind that he conjured up a scene in which the old man and this young girl were seated together, upon that foggy day, waiting the delivery of the foreign bonds.

'That night after I left him, as it seems to me,' Helen went on, 'he sought the old garret. It was there that he counted his heap of gold in the days gone by. Is it not probable that in a clouded moment, through force of habit, he was possessed by the thought that his wealth was there? Creeping stealthily into that room in the dead of night, screening his hand-lamp with his trembling hand, the light could not fail to fall upon your valise. Why should he wake you? why run the risk of your opposition? The bonds

were what he desired. The ruling passion overmastered him—his greed for gold. And then—and then'—

She had moved towards the mantelpiece, and had taken from it a small silver lamp while still speaking. She now paused and looked round.

'And then?' said Ringham eagerly.

'He took the bonds,' she said, 'and went stealthily out.'

'But you haven't told me,' urged Ringham—'how he got in.'

'You shall see.'

She lighted the lamp, and then beckoning to him to follow her, Helen led the way upstairs.

When they reached the top flight she handed him the lamp, and selecting a key from the bunch which she carried, Helen unlocked a door, and upon entering the room Ringham was instantly struck with the marked similarity in its shape, as well as in its window and doors, to the garret in which he had found shelter upon that memorable night in the other house.

'This was Mr Grinold's bedroom,' said Helen, seeing Ringham raise the lamp to glance about him—'the room he occupied nearly all his life—the room in which he died.'

It was scantily furnished: a little wooden bedstead in one corner, a deal table under the window, a rickety-looking chair; but Ringham's eye was principally attracted towards two cupboard doors, one on each side of the fireplace. They reminded him of the cupboards with the cobwebbed locks.

'Let us look inside,' said the girl anticipatively. 'Shall we?' Without waiting for a reply, she unlocked the cupboard nearest the door. A great iron safe filled up the space within.

'That's where Mr Grinold kept his gold—before I knew him—in the old miserly days! No one knows where the key to this safe is to be found; not even Mr Shuttleworth—no one, except myself.'

Leaving the cupboard unlocked, Helen turned to the other cupboard, and Ringham observed that she selected a different key for opening the door. This cupboard contained three empty shelves. She drew out these shelves; something now glittered upon the panelling which the woodwork of the middle shelf had concealed. It was a long steel bolt. Helen pulled back this bolt, gave the panelling a push with her hand, and a large door swung noiselessly open. She stepped forward, beckoning to Ringham over her shoulder to follow with the lamp. He hastened to obey, and next moment he found himself standing in the garret in which he had been robbed. The door had closed behind them with a dull thud.

'It's a very simple matter,' said Helen, 'when you know the secret; isn't it? This cobwebbed door, as you see, opens with its entire framework into Mr Grinold's bedroom when the bolt is unfastened. And who could have unfastened it on the night upon which he died but he?'

Ringham readily acquiesced. 'But,' he said—'but where are the bonds?'

'We shall find them,' she predicted, 'in the safe.'

Her prediction proved correct. Having discovered the safe-keys in a secret drawer in the old bureau, the safe-door was quickly opened. The bundle of foreign bonds lay snugly tied up in a deep recess. As Helen drew them forth a

letter addressed to 'Mr Gilbert Ringham' dropped upon the floor. It contained a business document signed by Anthony Grinold, acknowledging his receipt of the bonds from Cairo, dated upon the foggy day on which the courier had reached Austin Friars.

'Miss Warrener,' said Ringham fervently, 'I wish I could express my gratitude! But is that possible? I cannot find words.'

She was stooping to replace the bonds, and, possibly from the exertion of bending down, the colour suddenly mounted to her cheeks. Presently she looked up. 'There's nothing to thank me for. I'm so glad to think that he held them in his hands after all,' said Helen, 'before he died.'

Ringham was a welcome guest that evening at Charterhouse Square; and it was unanimously agreed that he should remain in London until Shuttleworth's return. One day—the day upon which the lawyer's arrival from Cairo was hourly expected—Ringham had stepped over with Helen to the old house in Austin Friars to restore some books which they had borrowed from the shelves of Mr Grinold's library. While descending the stairs the lamp-lighter lighted the old lamp at the entrance, and Ringham stopped at the window and looked down.

'It was there that I first saw you—do you remember?—on the foggy night upon which you locked me in.'

'Haven't you forgiven me yet?'

'Forgiven you? Helen, I have loved you ever since; and he held out his hands to her in appeal. 'Can you ever care for me?'

She gave him her hand, and they went lingeringly out into the twilight of Austin Friars.

A MOUNTAIN OF ALUM.

By E. H. PARKER.

IT is a very open question whether any of the readers of *Chambers's Journal* have ever heard of an alum-mine. Alum is obtained in England by subjecting alum-shale (coal, iron pyrites, and alumina) to the prolonged action of fire: sulphate of alumina is dissolved out of this by the admixture of water, and the addition of sulphate of potash or sulphate of ammonia then produces alum, of which 30,000 tons are manufactured in England every year. But when I was stationed at the port of Wenchow, in the Chinese maritime province of Chéi Kiang, I heard vague stories of a genuine solid mountain of alum in the neighbourhood, and I resolved to go and see it. I travelled south from Wenchow along a canal to the city of Jui-an, or Shui-an, and thence, crossing the Fei-lung or 'Flying Dragon' River, passed the salt-flats to my left, took a canal-boat to Ping-yang city, and beyond that as far as a place called Tsien-tsang, half-way up a short tidal river. Here I changed boats, sailed up with the tide, and in four hours more arrived at a place called Liu-shih, or 'Willow Stone,' whence I walked fourteen miles through lovely mountain scenery to the Fan Shan, or 'Alum Mountain' (lat. 27° 20', long. 120° 30'). So far as I could ascertain by industrious local inquiry, only one white man had ever visited these mines before, and he appears to have been the missionary Gutzlaff, who

fifty years ago used to wander alone round the coasts of China and Siam.

The presence of alum in the neighbourhood was forcibly brought to my notice in rather a disagreeable way. Whenever I reached an inn or resting-place in China, my servants were trained to bring me certain creature comforts in fixed order before any chaffering or arguing began. The first of these luxuries was always a shallow wooden pail of cold water and the 'hotel rag,' a sort of dishcloth dipped in hot water, with which all visitors swab down their faces. I used to plunge my face, eyes open, in this water in order to get the dust out of the corners. But on this occasion, no sooner had I put my face in than I felt as if my eyes and lips were being covered with sticking-plaster. Of course this was the alum, and I had omitted to reflect that all the local water must naturally be strongly impregnated with it. As a matter of fact, all water used for cooking and tea-drinking at this village has to be carried thither by coolies in buckets from a considerable distance. However, no permanent damage was done, and I at once set to work to cross-examine the villagers previous to visiting the mines myself.

I was informed that most of the alum was taken to a port called Ch'ih K'i, or 'Red Brook,' lying ten miles to the east of the Alum Mountain; thence it was carried by junk to Ku Ngao-t'ou, or 'Ancient Turtle Head,' the centre of the Ningpo alum-market, lying at the mouth of the tidal river above mentioned. At one time the alum was all taken to Liu Shih, and thence down the river, but it has since been found better to convey it by sea, probably because customs and *likin* interference has less hold upon it this way. The total annual export to Ningpo was stated to be 200,000 peculs, or say 12,000 tons; and the export tariff is fixed by treaty at '0045 of a tael for each pecul, or at the present low rate of silver exchange, three halfpence a hundredweight.

About two centuries ago the Chinese Emperor detected his heir in the act of corresponding with outsiders secretly by means of alum-water, as a sort of 'invisible ink,' or sympathetic ink. No such process appears to be known in Europe; but doubtless the incombustibility of alum in some way allows heat to be applied to the paper, and thus to bring out hidden writing.

Alum is extensively used all over China for clarifying water, and I have never once failed to secure a piece at the shortest notice, even in the remotest villages, when, as often happened, I needed a throat gargle.

Early the next morning I went to inspect the mountain, which is an isolated mass, perhaps ten miles round at the base, and at its highest point standing 1000 or 1200 feet above the level of the plain. All the people said it was one solid mass of alum; and indeed they were not far wrong, for it appeared to have been honeycombed, tunnelled, and torn up in every direction by countless generations of men. Where any section of virgin soil was visible, it looked like a half-disintegrated mixture of common earth, yellow sandstone, and grit-rock, with here and there large blocks of alum-stone strewn about it in the proportion of raisins and currants to the solid part of a plum-pudding. There is no science or mystery about it: all that is necessary is to pick

the stones out and carry them away to the kilns for further treatment. These kilns are covered in as a protection from the elements, and the blocks of alum are stowed away inside in the form of two loose walls, between which smoulders a very gentle furnace of brushwood. The Chinese labourers have a very ingenious as well as a simple machine for lessening the labour of stowage. A long pole like a battering-ram is suspended outside the door of the kiln in such a way that it can be made to swing up inside; blocks of alum are poised on the inner end, and three men by a clever thrust and twist so manipulate the pole that the blocks are carried up to the top level of the wall, and are then just tipped over to the right or left, so as to rest on and further heighten the wall. The stones now remain, very much as in a lime-kiln, until they are softened by the heat, after which they are placed in large wooden vats sunk into the ground, and there slaked with water for a few minutes only.

The next step is to take them out of the vats and scatter them over shallow pits, where they are broken with clubs into small fragments. Hard by is another set of vats, into which these pieces are thrown to soak in water for the space of three days and three nights. After undergoing this process the liquid mixture has almost exactly the appearance of quicklime. It is shovelled into an enormous mud boiler, so arranged with flues at the rear of the kiln as to derive its heat from the same furnace that softens the blocks of alum-stone. These mud boilers are in principle very like those which the Chinese use in Siam and the Malay peninsula for the purpose of extracting pure tin from the ore. Nothing could be cheaper or more economical. The bottom of the mud boiler, or rather the extreme apex of the bottom, consists of a tiny iron pan, which withstands the brunt of the action of the fire, and serves as a firm base for the cylindrical mud walls. But half-way up the boiler runs another fire like a winding flue, so that the heat is evenly distributed all over the inside. After being boiled into a treacly soup, the liquid is ladled out into pits of stone which are sunk into the ground, and is then allowed to cool.

As with the salt (described in the September part of *Chambers's Journal* for 1896) the pure alum crystallises to a thickness of about six inches, and forms a lining to the pits, having the appearance of dip tallow or horizontal stalactites of soap. When the alum has quite cooled a saw is applied, and the beautiful clear alum, in blocks of two sizes, a hundredweight and half a hundredweight, is carried off by coolies to the shipping port of Ch'ih-K'i. When I was there the men told me that twenty-four boiling-houses, all of the same size and capacity, were in full working order, and that none of them turned out more than 10,000 peculs a year—say 600 tons. The usual result of a day's work was from 20 to 40 peculs a day, according to season and circumstances. There are about 2500 labourers employed in boiling, and twice that number of coolies to carry the mineral away. At least half these carriers are women of non-Chinese extraction, called Zika—a race of semi-savages who may be described as a kind of Chinese gypsies.

A considerable amount of gypsum is also picked up among the rocks of the coast. It requires no treatment beyond washing.

TREASURE-SEEKING IN FRANCE AT
THE PRESENT DAY.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

THE latest *organised* attempt at discovery of the great legendary treasures belonging to unquestionable tradition is surrounded by circumstances of the most romantic interest. It was during the summer of 18— that the young Marquis of Rouvière, attaché to the French Embassy in England, was seated all alone in his room on the second floor of the French Ambassador's residence in Hanover Square, looking out of the window over the dreary open space, and contrasting the dullness of life on Sunday morning in London and the gaiety of Paris at that same hour. He was aroused from his fit of the blues by a gentle tap on the door, and, turning, beheld standing before him a long, gaunt individual, with small, red-rimmed, twinkling eyes, snuffy nose, unshaven beard, and other signs held to betray the possession of little soap but of great science—in short, a tall, raw-boned, gray-haired savant, with a bundle of papers under one arm, and under the other an umbrella, which neither persuasion nor violence on the part of the horrified English footman had induced him to relinquish at the bottom of the stairs. Without even waiting for the stranger to speak, the Count reminded him in a snappish tone that, the day being Sunday, no business was possible, and that it was hard indeed that the poor, overworked, under-paid attachés of embassies could not even have their miserable Sundays at their own disposal, &c. To this the poor, timid savant listened with shrinking deference; until at last, becoming aware that the stranger was repeating over and over again that the business on which he came to speak was of a strictly private nature, and concerned indeed the future fortune and welfare of the Count himself, the diplomat suddenly began to listen. The savant, after opening the door to see that there were no listeners on the landing, drew his chair close up to the table and extracted from his pocketbook a paper which he presented as his introduction. It was signed by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, requesting aid and protection from every French Ambassador and Consul throughout the world for the bearer, who was occupied in antiquarian research in England. The Count began at last to think the visitor worthy of attention, and sat down with the air of a martyr. But before long the interest had grown so absorbing, so exciting, so spirit-stirring, that Monsieur de Rouvière felt himself spell-bound as he listened.

The personal history of the stranger was soon told. He had been despatched to London from Paris by a brother-savant gifted with less learning but greater pecuniary means, to make some important researches in English history for the great work upon which he was then engaged, and which, completed by the researches thus made, has become a most celebrated historical work. For this purpose permission had been obtained to examine certain chests of documents preserved in the Tower of London. The antiquary had been engaged in this pursuit in vaults and

lumber-rooms amid dust and cobwebs for seven long, weary months, and had been fortunate enough to rescue many a secret of the utmost importance from the oblivion of mankind and the rats of the Tower. His work was well-nigh completed when he discovered at the bottom of one of the chests a small copper casket of oblong shape. The box was neither curious nor valuable—a mere case of thick copper such as the French shopkeepers of the last century used for depositing their daily takings, long and shallow, with a disproportionate handle and a long, flat-headed key. But this key was tied to the handle by a strong cord, and enclosed in a parchment envelope covered with official-looking heraldic seals, many of which the savant recognised on the instant as belonging to the most illustrious houses of ancient France. There were lions and griffins couchant and rampant, there were mermaids and porcupines, nay, there was that well-known one, not the least glorious, the hog with a tuft of palm-leaves growing from his snout and showing a broken tusk. But more curious than all this was the fact that the signature of each *preux* was affixed beneath his coat-of-arms, evidently all signed at the same time and with the same pen. The box evidently contained some deposit to which all of these signatures bore testimony. After it had been thus sealed and secured in the presence of the witnesses—fourteen in number—it was obviously intended that it should not be opened save when each signatory being present could redeem his own signature, and break his own seal.

The visitor at this point of his recital plunged his long thin claw into his left pocket, and drew thence the object of which he had been speaking. With a look of learned satisfaction, he handed the box across the table to M. de Rouvière, pointing to the arms of his own house and the signature of his grandfather, guillotined in '93. The young attaché now began to be impressed with a very different feeling towards the whole affair to that which he had experienced before. His hand, which had hitherto lain listless at the elbow of his chair, was suddenly stretched forth to clutch the box thus tendered towards him, the lid of which was unlocked.

Monsieur de Rouvière slid the chair nearer to his visitor, and leaned with both his elbows on the table in an attitude of eager interest. The savant was an artist to his very heart's core, and knew well that this moment was sure to come. So, beholding his listener well prepared, he opened the box, upon which he had kept his hand lest the Count should open it himself, and drew thence a long strip of parchment, from which he read the following extraordinary statement, written in a clear, firm hand, in lines of equal length, and with a broad margin all round. But he did not at once proceed to read it aloud; he knew far too well the value of the *mise en scène* he had been at so much pains to get up. Neither did he give the box to his companion, but deliberately proceeded to inflict what promised at first to be a dry and dreary yarn upon the patience of his listener, who, however, has often since confessed that without it the rest of the experience would have been vastly less exciting.

The antiquary repeated over again what he had

told the Count but five minutes before : that he had arrived in England on a special mission from the great French historian, Guizot, to gather scraps from the Tower of London, and that he had been engaged at this work for the last seven months. It was while diving to the very bottom of one of the rotten old tea-chests with which the economical English administration had replaced the wondrously carved oaken *cabinets* wherein the state papers had been doubtless originally secured, that he had lighted on the box. Here an unmistakable sigh of impatience accompanying the twirling of the silken cord which bound the Count's slender waist and secured the gray flannel dressing-gown in which he was attired, caused the geometrical countenance of the savant to relax into a smile, and he deliberately replaced the parchment in the box, and shut the lid down with a sharp report. He then turned suddenly towards M. de Rouvière, and asked him coolly if he had ever seen the Sainte Chapelle. 'Of course, of course,' replied the young man, closing his hand tightly with that *crispé* movement usual with Frenchmen suffering from *ennui*. 'Well, then, Monsieur le Comte, you must remember the figures of the twelve apostles—that is, have you seen the restorations now going on by the king's orders?' 'Yes, yes ; of course I have,' exclaimed the Count peevishly ; 'for the love of God, get on,' and he pulled out his watch with a jerk. 'Never mind the time ; better put off the narrative,' exclaimed the stranger. 'I assure you I am in no hurry ; indeed I have the whole day at your disposal.' The case being evidently too desperate for resistance, the unhappy victim gathered his dressing-gown over his knees, and flung himself backwards in his chair, clasping his hands and groaning aloud. The stranger, however, paid little heed to these manifestations ; he seemed rather to enjoy them. He settled himself quite comfortably before he spoke again, and then merely said, 'Then you must have observed the figure of St Peter already set up in the first archway from the altar.' The Count nodded his head sharply without unclosing his eyes, so that the gesture of the speaker's hand raised far above his head to express height and grandeur was totally lost upon him. 'You must have observed that there are six arches on either side the aisle—they are for the statues of the twelve apostles.' The Count thought it but right to nod again, but this time he changed his position, placing his right hand across his left, and twirling his two thumbs in contrary directions as a token that he was listening.

The savant now drew close to his host and tapped with long, hooked nails upon his knee, as he whispered forth :

'Well, the whole twelve are to be of the same height and size as St Peter.'

The words seemed not to produce the smallest effect upon the listener ; but upon the speaker himself they acted like magic. He bounded in his chair, snapped his fingers in the air, and laughed so nervously that he was seized with a fit of coughing, which caused poor M. de Rouvière to be seized with a most intense longing to be alone, and his friend—well, no matter where. But when the coughing was over, and the stranger sufficiently recovered to speak again, the indifference of the listener was soon over likewise.

'You have doubtless heard that these twelve apostles are to be the exact reproduction of those which stood there before the Revolution.'

M. de Rouvière had *not* heard this nor anything else concerning the statues, and therefore could do nothing but again change the position of his hands, while the speaker continued :

'That is to say, the *imitation* will be as exact as plaster and ormolu and chrysocol-coloured glass and composition *can* resemble solid silver ! virgin gold ! and precious stones !'

The last sentence was uttered slowly and deliberately, and with a stress upon each word ; and after a pause he continued :

'Of such materials as these were the holy effigies constructed which once filled the arches down the nave of the Sainte Chapelle. When Saint Louis founded the Sainte Chapelle the whole treasury of the kingdom was at his command. He was no miser, as you know, and dealt out his homage to heaven with no niggard hand. The twelve apostles were of such value that they became, with the altar gates of Notre Dame and the silver branches of Saint Denis, not the mere appendage of such and such a chapel but part of the treasure of France (*le trésor de France*), which no sovereign even in the sorest strait had ever dared to touch. But few, as you can well imagine, could be entrusted with the knowledge of the marvellous truth. To the vulgar the statues seemed composed of nothing more than stone or plaster silvered over. The crowns were supposed to be of coloured glass, and the round disc-like patens the holy fraternity hold in their hands of copper burnished to the hue of gold. Little could the people dream, as they bent the knee before each, that the figures were aught beside the revered semblance of the followers of our Lord, and they worshipped them with the cold lip-service of indifference and custom. Had they but known the truth, how fervent would have been their homage ! how ardent would have been their adoration ! None would have turned away to the high altar could they have imagined that the real and true god of their worship lay beneath the tarnished metal and age-bedimmed ornaments which met their view. But the secret was well guarded, and from generation to generation by none of those to whom it was entrusted was it ever betrayed. Even up to the darkest days of the Revolution had the statues remained unharmed ; but a moment arrived when danger drew so near, even for the sake of the small value attributed to the supposed mere coatings of silver and of gold, to the burnished copper and coloured glass, that the few trusty hearts who knew the secret determined to rescue the richest treasure of the French crown from the hands of the despoilers. On the very night of the sacking of Saint Denis these loyal and noble gentlemen met together. Your grandfather was amongst the number. Here is his seal and here his signature.'

The savant paused once more to push the box towards M. de Rouvière, who was surprised into the most eager attention.

'All I have told you is from inference and research, into which I have been led by the writing on this parchment and the knowledge which all readers of the history of the time must possess of the extraordinary and sudden disappearance of the statues of the Sainte Chapelle.'

You will see the fact recorded in many of the pamphlets and opuscules of the day, attributing to "a guilty fanaticism" the carrying off what had become (however trifling in value) the property of the nation. At any rate, when the mob broke in the statues were missing; and more than that, no trace of them has ever been found to this day. Now, read the parchment and you will find it all explained.

M. de Rouvière took the parchment from the box with a trembling hand. He could not account for the emotion with which he was seized, and he tried to shake it off and to appear as calm as possible while he read in an undertone the following extraordinary document:

'We, the undersigned, true and faithful followers of the king, deeming the mighty treasure of Saint Louis to be in danger of spoliation, have determined on depositing it in a place of safety. This treasure of Saint Louis consists of twelve statues of the Holy Apostles, each one of molten silver and of immense weight, comprising the patens which each apostle carries, and which is of solid gold. The jewels which adorn the crowns and robes are principally of rubies, sapphires, and oriental pearls; those on the robe of Saint John, among which is a starred sapphire, are alone worth twenty thousand livres. To rescue this inestimable treasure we have resolved to bury it in a place known to ourselves alone, each of the undersigned being bound by a solemn oath never to reveal even at the death-hour the place chosen for concealment. We have all agreed that the spot shall be where the lines of latitude and longitude cross each other upon the map of France accompanying this document. The place is well adapted for the purpose by reason of the facility of water-carriage from the quay and of easy landing close to the spot; and the owner of the land is one on whom but little suspicion of aid in the cause of Church and King is ever likely to fall.'

Here followed the signatures, fourteen in number, each one of the greatest nobles of the land, accompanied by his seal and *paraph*. Monsieur de Rouvière needed no telling which was that of his grandfather. He recognised it on the instant, and his heart beat quick.

To the parchment were appended several long thin strips of paper of a dingy colour, the first 'accused reception,' as the French say, by the *patron* of the lugger-boat *Margoton* of Rouen of two barrels of rusty nails and scrap-iron, and then another to the same purpose giving receipt for two others, until the whole number of twelve was completed, on different boats belonging to different towns in Normandy. In those days such boats were in great numbers employed in bringing up groceries from Havre and dry goods from Rouen, so that they were easy to freight on returning from any one of the quays of Paris. All these barrels were the property of Denis Dutailis, the *marchand de ferraille* on the quay, and consigned by him to his brother René Dutailis, who lived in the little village of Fulchiron, and would either fetch the goods from the landing-place of the town to which the boat belonged, or await their arrival at the nearest point of the road leading inland from the Seine to Fulchiron. This happened fortunately to be the stone-yard of Maître Lambert, the mason at Saint Landelle,

where the barges and lugger-boats of the Seine were wont to stop on their way both up and down the river, and whose wharf, being provided with powerful cranes for raising the stone, would make the landing easy.

'And this is all,' said the stranger as he folded up the document, replacing it in the box, which he locked with care. Then, handing the key to Monsieur de Rouvière, he added, 'To you, Monsieur le Comte, belong this box and its contents, and therefore to you alone should it be confided. The historical researches I have made concerning the affair were made *con amore*; they are in my way and have interested me: the geographical ones are of your domain; and it is for you to trace the precious treasure step by step to its hiding-place. I have my ideas concerning the locality, from historical associations and the habit I have acquired of combination and inference with regard to historical events.' And here the savant resumed the look of baby-cunning he had worn before. 'It would be for me to suggest whose land would have been chosen at that precise moment for the burying of the statues; it is for you to discover in what direction that land must lie.' The stranger rose as he uttered the last words. Monsieur de Rouvière was so bewildered with the thoughts which came crowding to his brain that he arose also, without any further idea than that of an intense desire to be alone, that he might examine the box and the parchment without interruption.

He was an older man by some years when at last he told the tale of that memorable adventure, yet when relating the story to his friends he still dwelt with remark on the want of courtesy of which he was guilty on that occasion, never to have inquired the stranger's name or address, and to have suffered him to depart without even so much as a word of thanks for the preference shown to himself in this extraordinary affair. For some time after the departure of his strange visitor, the young attaché remained as if in a dream, gazing steadfastly at the metal casket as though it contained the key of his future destiny, examining it in every light, as it were, before he ventured to open it. The very sound of the metal across the woollen table-cover grated on his nerves, and he actually started when, scarcely conscious of the act, he placed the key within the lock, and the lid flew open, exhibiting the folded parchment and discoloured seals with which it was adorned.

The document once drawn from its hiding-place, the Count proceeded to treat the affair in a more business-like way, and he perused it over first of all mentally, then in a murmur, and finally aloud—even to the very last of the fourteen signatures appended thereto. Every one of the receipts of the various *patrons* were also carefully examined, even to the shape and pattern of the crosses by which those who could not write had expressed their adherence to the terms. He unfolded the tawny little map of France which lay still undisturbed at the bottom of the box; but the Count's education, conducted on modern principles, had not gone so far back in geography as the ancient provincial subdivisions of France, and he found himself all abroad as he gazed upon the widespread 'governments' of 1785. He mused away the whole of that quiet Sunday

afternoon still in his dressing-gown and slippers, his elbows resting on the table, his forehead resting in his hands, gazing down upon the box which seemed to act with magnetic spell and send him into a wild dream of the future, wherein he beheld the shattered fortunes of his house completely restored by his own share in the wealth thus brought to him. Thus he mused until the first dinner-bell aroused him from his reverie; and then he started up in sore perplexity, for had he not told the *maître d'hôtel* that his place would be vacant that day at the ambassador's table, as he had promised to meet a friend at four o'clock in the Park and drive with him to the 'Star and Garter' at Richmond should the weather prove fine. The weather *had* proved fine enough no doubt, for the sun, just now about to set, was streaming into the room, belying the threat of fog and rain and mist held forth in the morning; and he looked with dismay out of the window on the green wavy lines in the enclosure—the merry children at play on the grass, the gaily-dressed Sunday folks hurrying to and fro, ay, and even the dusky though sunlit old statue of Pitt.

What the Count did with the remainder of the day has never been part of the tale. He has never disclosed more than that, having carefully secreted the mysterious casket in a safe place, and dressed himself, he went out; and did not return till past midnight—when, despite the lateness of the hour, he read once more the parchment before retiring to bed.

A week or two afterwards the Count set out for France, furnished with what he deemed every necessary information concerning the probable locality of the *Saint Coin*, as the hiding-place was referred to by the signers of the document. The question had been submitted to several of the most prudent members of the aristocracy. Science had been called in to aid in establishing the point at which the lines of latitude and longitude crossed each other; and this was found to be near a village called Viviers, in Normandy, which on inquiry proved to be the property of the Orleans family! It had formed part of the restored private domain of Louis-Philippe, and had been sold in lots—consequently at the time at which the document was penned must have belonged to Philippe Egalité! He was the person who was 'never likely to raise suspicion of connivance in any attempt to aid the interests of royalty.' The Count, accompanied by a few trusty friends, went straight to the precise spot indicated in the parchment—in the midst of a ploughed field, at that very moment in preparation for sowing turnips. There really *was* something remarkable about the place, for on it stood a melancholy-looking clump of poplars, beneath which flourished, rank and dank, all kinds of brambles and under-wood, strangely out of keeping with the care and cultivation bestowed on the rest of the ground. The farmer to whom the field belonged, asked to explain why such disorder was suffered to exist where all besides betrayed such industry, replied that he was bound by oath upon the crucifix sworn to his dying father never to disturb by spade or plough that one particular spot. 'Old folks have queer fancies,' said the farmer, 'and this patch of ground seemed to possess some religious value in my father's eyes. He often said he bought the wood (it was all wood when the lot was sold)

merely for the sake of that ugly clump of poplars; and when we cut down the other trees and ploughed up the ground he carefully reserved that patch from sharing the fate of the rest. I was a boy then, and curious; but he would tell me no more than that he inherited the reverence he felt for the place from his father, who would often kneel and pray there, and when he died spoke of it as the *Saint Coin* or Holy Corner, which ought never to be disturbed.'

The effect of the words was electrical. The attaché, and the capitalist and engineer by whom he was accompanied, received a prodigious shock, and the affair seemed now certain. A fabulous weight of silver, besides virgin gold and precious stones, lay beneath their feet! The difficulty was to hide their emotion from the farmer, and not appear too anxious about the purchase of that identical turnip-field. So they turned aside in apparent indifference, and began to talk about the capabilities of the place for general purposes. The engineer was mentally making his measurements; the capitalist was already reckoning the fabulous result; the Count was already building a château on the very spot where stood the poplars. But wise and prudent men were they, and so returned to the little inn without even speaking of the bargain they were so anxious to conclude.

The field was bought, a field of seven *arpents*. But little above its real value was paid for it, the farmer accepting over and above the price fixed upon a small sum as conscience-money for the *Saint Coin*, having been persuaded for a consideration that the oath was personal to himself alone, and that no harm would come of it so long as it was not he who disturbed the bones doubtless buried beneath the poplars, nor gave his consent to their being displaced. The bargain being concluded, Monsieur de Rouvière had to return to England; and there he formed an association for the thorough exploration of the spot and its surroundings. With him were associated six members of the English aristocracy, intimate friends of his, and six French noblemen. Lord L—, at that time a cabinet minister, was amongst the English members of the company, as well as another member of the House of Lords subsequently high in office under the British government. These gentlemen agreed to make excavations in a certain field at Viviers in Normandy—to share alike the expense of the undertaking, and also the profits which might arise from the sale of the treasure found there. For nearly half-a-century has the search been going on. It is proceeding still at intervals and by the hands of private speculators; it has some time since been abandoned as hopeless by the original association. Deeper and deeper still have the excavations been carried on; the square patch of poplars has disappeared. Indeed the present generation of labourers declare that the exact site of the plantation is scarcely certain; but the opinion is that it stood far to the left of the diggings still proceeding in 1870. Thousands and thousands of pounds sterling have been swallowed up in this hitherto fruitless search, and the place is well known throughout the country as 'Chaos.'

The writer of this article was told by a gentleman of Falaise, the Marquis de Graveraud, who

at one time belonged to the association, that he believed more than two millions of francs had been engulfed in the works; but that when he himself visited the place he felt convinced that the diggings and levellings, and the carting away of the earth from the excavations, could not have been accomplished under double that amount! In many places the diggings have proceeded to the depth of two hundred feet. In all they have been stopped by natural causes alone—generally the presence of granite; in one only by the warm gray mud peculiar to this part of the country, and which, filling up again as fast as it was removed, rendered perseverance useless. Up to this moment nothing whatever has been found, not even the trace of any previous disturbance of the soil; still the speculators do not despair. The search, I repeat, still goes on. The speculation is considered as good as ever; the speculators alone are changed. All manner of ingenious explanations and excuses for the non-success of past searches are invented. Not one reasonable argument against the successful issue of the search has ever been listened to by the searchers; but onward they go, clinging to the shadow which is dragging them forward to the precipice of their own excavating, and where they have already beheld their predecessors engulfed.

This affair of Saint Coin is the last organisation of talent and capital for the discovery of a national treasure. Single cases that have come under our own eye within the last few years are some of them even more full of romance and adventure than this. We must reserve them for another occasion, omitting, however, cases already made public, such as that of the three bankers, the Brothers M——, whose discovery of forty millions in specie which had been concealed in the cellars of their uncle's house in the Faubourg St Germain made all Paris quiver with emotion only a few years since. The Prince de B——, when his parents had been guillotined at Alençon during the Revolution, was placed out by the Commune as a charity-apprentice to a shepherd in one of the villages of the environs; on falling into a dry well covered over with weeds and moss, he found himself all bleeding and sore, not from the contact of stones and pebbles, but from that of bags of six-franc crown-pieces with which the country people of the place still declare the well to have been half-filled up. There is still the treasure of King Stanislaus, buried in the hillside just without the gates of Nancy, in endeavouring to secure which M. Fay, the father of Leontine the whilom child-phenomenon of the French stage, and afterwards reader to the Empress of Russia, expended the whole of his own fortune and his daughter's earnings besides. There are still the jewels of Madame Dubarry lying buried in the toolhouse at Luciennes, although the said toolhouse has been undermined, and its walls have crumbled to the earth by dint of the diggings which have created a yawning chasm where its floor once lay. There is the treasure of the Duc de Raguse, who buried the military chests at Belleville when he delivered Paris into the hands of the allies; there is the chest of Spanish doubloons which lies still undiscovered in the Island of Sequia at Neuilly, on the search for which great sums have been expended in vain. Of the treasure of

the château of Pantin, something has really been found—a series of empty earthen vases beneath the flooring of the rustic ballroom in the park, which evidently once contained something of value, for they are all stamped with the arms of Orleans and the cipher of the Duke and that of Madame de M—— entwined. This discovery, strange to say, instead of disheartening the seekers by showing them that somebody earlier awake than they had been before them, has given them fresh hope; and they go on, cheered by the conviction that 'where that stood *may* stand another twice as good.'

Thus there are treasures enough well authenticated and still to be discovered. The writer sincerely hopes that if any of his readers, enlightened by the indications here given, try the search and are successful, they will remember to whom they owe their good fortune! Having himself been engaged in one or two of the more interesting of the searches for ever going on in Paris, the writer offers his experience (all he has gained in the pursuit) to the intelligent and enterprising, feeling perfectly convinced that in every case the treasure sought for still exists undisturbed, to be discovered by those already possessed of a greater treasure than any yet unearthed—virtue, self-abnegation, and personal disinterestedness, which the old monks declared to be indispensable for success in treasure-seeking!

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A WELL-EQUIPPED laboratory, which is said to be the first of its kind built by the state in this or any other country, was recently inaugurated in London, its object being to carry out the important analytical work required by the Inland Revenue Board and by the crown contract department. This work, so important to the country at large, has hitherto been performed in very inadequate quarters at Somerset House; and the government chemists may be congratulated upon having now an establishment in which their difficult duties can be carried out under far more favourable conditions. The general public has very little idea of what these duties consist, or in what a large measure they affect the taxpayers' pockets. Here are beautiful appliances for testing the strength of brewers' 'wort,' so as to adjust the dutiable value of beer. Wines and spirits of all kinds are also carefully analysed here, so that it may be noted which rate of duty they will pass under. Tobacco is tested here, so that any adulterating leaf or added moisture can be readily detected; there is apparatus for determining the flashing-point of mineral oils; and tea, coffee, rum, chocolate, and other food-stuffs are examined as to their purity and agreement with samples submitted, before John Bull puts his hand into his capacious pocket to buy them for his soldiers and sailors. Even the cloth and serge used in the services are submitted to careful tests; and quite recently the dried and compressed vegetables going out to India for our frontier troops have gone through the searching examination of the analysts here. It frequently happens that in cases of food adulteration the experts on either side will differ widely as to the composition of the substance under dispute. It will be the

duty of the new laboratory to give the final decision in such cases. The building is close to the Law Courts, and is under the supervision of Professor Thorpe.

A curious industry has sprung up in Spain since the decline of silk-culture there, in the production of what is known as silkworm-gut for fishing-lines. The grub is fed on mulberry leaves as usual in silk-culture; but before it begins to spin—that is, in May and June—it is killed by immersion in vinegar. The substance which would have formed the cocoon is then drawn out from its body in the form of a thick silken thread, which is treated with chemicals and afterwards dried. These threads are made up in bundles of one hundred, and the Spanish peasants travel with them along the shores of the Mediterranean as far as France. The best quality of thread is round, the flat form being inferior and due to unhealthiness in the worm. The chief seat of this industry is Murcia.

Many a romance has found its chief incident in the recovery of treasure from a submerged wreck; and it must be confessed that such an incident invariably carries great interest with it. This is intensified when the story is founded upon fact; and it would be difficult to find one of more absorbing interest than that which has recently been told of the steamer *Skyro*. This vessel sailed from Cartagena for London in April 1891 with a valuable cargo, which included nine thousand pounds' worth of bar silver. She was caught in a fog off Cape Finisterre, struck on a reef, and finally went down about two miles off that coast in thirty fathoms of water. Many efforts were made to recover this treasure, and last year some of the silver bars were raised. But the wreck lies in such a wild and boisterous position, there are such strong currents to contend with, and the depth, 180 feet, is so near the limit beyond which no diving operations can be carried on, that the work has presented almost superhuman difficulties. Operations were resumed this summer with complete success, and the whole of the silver has now been recovered. In addition to the difficulties already set forth it was found by the divers that the deck of the vessel had collapsed, and much of the framework of the ship had to be blown out by dynamite before the cargo could be reached. The chief diver, to whose indomitable pluck the recovery of this treasure is due, Angel Erostarbe by name, reports that the wreck is now just a heap of old iron, no part of it except the engines and boilers standing higher than himself.

It seems strange to British ears to learn that vintage operations commenced at Cardiff early in October last, for Wales has not hitherto been regarded as a wine-producing country. But our readers will doubtless remember that the Marquis of Bute some years ago started experimental vineyards here, and the success attending his efforts has already been recorded in these columns. There are two vineyards, one at Castell Loch and the other at Swanbridge, and they are both planted with a hardy kind of grape from the colder wine-producing districts of France. The vines are planted in rows about three feet apart, and there are nearly five thousand to the acre. It is expected that about forty hogsheads of wine will result from this vintage, that being

the quantity yielded in 1893. The wine has been described as very fine in flavour; it is the pure juice of the grape without any admixture except a trace of sugar. The vineyards are under the care of Mr Pettigrew, F.R.H.S., who has propagated hundreds of vines from the original French stock, many of which have been sent to different parts of the country for experimental purposes. As yet none of the diseases which have wrought such havoc amid the vineyards on the continent have made their appearance on the Marquis of Bute's property.

Mr Henniker Heaton, to whom the public is so much indebted for the many valuable postal reforms which he has initiated, has recently pointed out the ridiculous system, or rather want of system, observed in counting words in telegrams, certain compound names of places being counted as one word and others as two or three. In a telegram to De Vere Gardens, for example, the sender has to pay for three words; but in one sent to Llanarmon-Dyffryn-Ceiog-Ruabon, that formidable address, with more than double the letters of the other, counts as one word only. According to the postal authorities Herne Bay is one word and Herne Hill two; King's Cross (Halifax) is one word, but King's Cross (London) is two; non-delivery one word, and short delivery two. These are only a few of the absurd anomalies pointed out by Mr Heaton and emphasised by being placed in parallel columns. He suggests that either all such compound words should be counted as one, or that addresses should be free, which is the rule in all the Australasian colonies. It is difficult to understand how the present method of word-counting came into vogue; certainly it cannot much longer stand in the face of the wholesome ridicule which Mr Heaton's strictures have excited.

The locust has always been regarded as one of the most formidable of crop-pests, and hitherto little has been done in the way of combating its ravages. Recently, however, experiments have been carried out in Natal, and a government report of the successful results obtained has been issued, which will be studied with interest by agriculturists all the world over. The locusts were attacked while still in the 'hopper' stage, and one Natal cultivator succeeded in clearing his farm of seven hundred acres of the pest in ten days. The remedy tried with such success is arsenic, and the mixture used consists of one pound of caustic soda dissolved in four gallons of boiling water, to which is afterwards added one pound of arsenic. The decoction is then well stirred and boiled for a few minutes, the operator taking care not to inhale the fumes. This forms a stock solution which should be carefully labelled and kept under lock and key. For use, half-a-gallon of stock solution is added to four gallons of hot or cold water, in which ten pounds of brown sugar have been dissolved. Or, as an alternative, half-a-gallon of the poison may be mixed with five gallons of treacle. The sweet liquid thus compounded is distributed over the land, splashed with a large brush upon anything which the locusts are known to have a craving for, or maize stalks and grass may be dipped in the fluid and spread about the roads and fields. The locusts are speedily attracted by the sweet stuff, and die by thousands. It is needless to say that

the poison is quite as deadly to winged locusts; but it is quite impossible to know when they are coming, so that it is better to aim at destroying the creatures while still in the 'hopper' stage.

In a recent lecture on 'The Goldfields of Alaska' delivered by Mr Harry de Windt, one difficulty which besets the traveller was dwelt upon, which so far as we can remember has not been alluded to by the many writers who have detailed the obstacles to progress towards the new Eldorado. Mr de Windt says that camp life in Alaska is made unbearable by swarms of mosquitoes, and that, for the first few days on the Yukon, conversation, sleep, and even eating were out of the question. Famished with hunger, after a hard day's work, he was unable to raise a mouthful to his lips because of the persistent onslaughts of these terrible insects. The irritation caused by their bites was so great as to lead to positive illness, and the natives suffer tortures from May until September, although their bodies are smothered with rancid oil as a partial protection from attack. An Alaskan mosquito will torture a dog to death, and both bear and deer will take to the water in self-defence. In the tent occupied by the explorer a piece of rag was kept smouldering all night, nearly suffocating the inmates, but having no apparent effect upon the bloodthirsty insect marauders. Mr de Windt sums up his complaint against the mosquitoes by describing them as the greatest curse of the land.

A steam lifeboat on a new principle has recently been added to the fleet of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, and has been placed at New Brighton—at the entrance to the Mersey—for service in the port of Liverpool. The boat is built of steel, is fifty-five feet in length, and will accommodate a crew of nine men and forty passengers. The propelling power is hydraulic—that is to say, sea-water is pumped into the vessel and forced out through tubes which are fitted fore and aft. This method of propulsion does away with any necessity for paddles or propellers, which are so apt to become a source of danger when floating wreckage is about. The new vessel, which is named *The Queen*, is constructed to consume both coal and liquid fuel; and in a recent trial her total consumption of the combined fuel was eight hundred and forty pounds in a two hours' run. The highest speed attained was close upon nine knots, but it is expected that this will be exceeded on further trial. The cost of this boat—the third steam lifeboat which has been built in this country—was £5000.

There are now very few spots on the earth's surface which have not been explored by man, and it is quite refreshing to learn that an island, called Christmas Island, which lies about two hundred miles south of Java, awaits examination and report by scientific experts. One thing only is known about its resources, and that is that phosphates abound there; and as a natural consequence a company is now sending out a working party to develop an industry there. But a far more interesting part of the story is that Dr John Murray, of Edinburgh, has offered to the trustees of the British Museum to defray the cost of sending out a naturalist to the island for the purpose of making observations and collecting specimens of fauna and flora, provided that the trustees will appoint an official to undertake this mission. As

a result of this generous offer Mr C. W. Andrews, of the geological department of the Museum, has gone out with instructions to make an exhaustive survey and exploration of this island, which is about the same size as Jersey, the area being about a hundred square miles. The highest point is about twelve hundred feet above sea-level, and most of the ground is covered by a thick forest growth. There is a small population of twenty-two—half this number being Europeans.

It is a well-known fact that fish, like insects, are attracted to any bright light; and a French entomologist has lately taken advantage of this circumstance in fishing for specimens in a pond. With a portable battery and a small incandescent electric lamp attached to a net he was able to secure a large number of fish, larvæ, tadpoles, &c., at one operation. The net, measuring about one yard across, was slowly lowered into the water, and when it reached the bottom of the pond the little lamp above it was connected with the battery. All the living creatures within reach of the apparatus rushed towards the light, and were immediately secured in the net. It is obvious that the method is applicable on a far larger scale, and may prove to be of great service to night-fishermen.

The Welsbach incandescent burner, which has done so much for gas-lighting, has now been applied to mineral oil lamps with entire success. A special form of burner is employed, upon which is hung the mantle or network of earthy material, the incandescence of which gives the system its name. It is claimed for this lamp that it affords a light of fifty candle-power with one-third the consumption of oil of any other petroleum lamp of the same efficiency. The wick is of annular form, and the lamp is so contrived that, should the delicate mantle fail from any cause, the oil can be burnt in the ordinary manner until a fresh mantle is procured. It is on the life of this mantle that the success of the system will depend. We noticed in our examination of the lamp that the mesh of the mantle was much coarser than that in common use with gas, and possibly this will tend to greater permanence. The Incandescent Gas-light Company, who have introduced the new lamp, credit the mantles with an efficiency of one thousand hours, but we should be inclined to regard this as an exaggerated estimate.

A trial was recently made of an apparatus which will enable firemen to remain in dense smoke or other irrespirable atmosphere for many minutes without inconvenience. This contrivance, which is known as the Vajen Bader patent smoke-protector, takes the form of a helmet-shaped head-covering fitted with mica eyeholes, and supplied with fresh air from a reservoir containing a supply in a compressed state. In the recent trials, a mass of leather, cotton waste, and other material calculated to give off suffocating fumes, was lighted in a closed police cell, and a man wearing the apparatus was able to remain in the midst of the smoke for twenty minutes, the great heat evolved at last terminating the experiment. It is expected that the invention will prove remarkably valuable in locating a hidden fire on shipboard.

There have been so many instances of alleged water-finding by means of the divining-rod that the circumstances of a case which recently

occurred at Ampthill are not without interest. It would seem that the urban district council of that place engaged a water-diviner, and incurred in doing so an expense of thirteen pounds odd, being ten guineas fee and travelling expenses. The district auditor refused to pass this item of the accounts on the ground that the water-diviner had made pretence to a power which he did not possess. He regarded his claim 'as an imposition on the minds of the credulous, and treated him as a person whom it was not competent for the council to employ for the purpose for which he had been employed, and the payment for his employment as one for which there was no authority in law.' It is now competent for the council to appeal to the Local Government Board and subsequently to the High Court; and it is perhaps as well that they should do so in order that a popular superstition may for ever be set at rest.

The government botanist to the Cape Colony, Professor MacOwen, contributes to the *Kew Bulletin* an interesting and valuable paper upon fruit-growing at the Cape, and the opening which it affords to those with the requisite knowledge of orchard work. Intelligent and practised growers alone are needed, and there is an unfailing market in the up-country, to say nothing of what could be done abroad. 'We want them,' says the professor, 'from England, from the States, from California, in fact from anywhere where the skill and experience required have run into every-day practice. This is the immigration wanted just now at the Cape, to catch at the opportunity of the moment, and to turn skilled fruit-growing into gold. No question that success awaits the man who knows how to deal with fruit-trees, to break his ground up properly, to drain, to prune, to gather, to pack for market up-country or for market in Covent Garden, and who has the well-founded contempt for the

slovenly style of letting things grow themselves and taking as a crop what chance sends and insect plagues leave.' It may be noted that the seasons at the Cape fall conversely with those of Europe and the United States, and of course this represents a great advantage to the fruit-grower. Professor MacOwen advises those who go out to place their money in a bank on arriving, and seek out a situation with some one who is cultivating his own land, so as to become accustomed to colonial ways and methods. To begin without local knowledge would be to court failure at the outset.

CHRISTMAS.

With roseate light the east is all aglow;
In tranquil beauty smiles the Christmas morn;
And far across the softly-lying snow
The bells send joyful tidings: Christ is born!

From glistening leaves the holly berries show
Like coral beads against each wreathed wall;
While gleams the pearl-hung branch of mistletoe
Alike in lowly home and stately hall.

Heart-sunshine brightens every glad young face;
Even older folks, whose heads are turning gray,
Lay down Time's burdens for a little space,
And join the children in their happy play.

Sweet memories put forth their tender plea;
Forgotten friendships press their claims once more;
Unseen but felt, Faith, Hope, and Charity
Walk through our midst as in the days of yore.

About our lives the old traditions cling;
The old deep-rooted customs still abide—
Still to our hearts the 'herald angels' sing:
'Let Peace and Goodwill reign at Christmastide.'
E. MATTHESON.

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Extra Christmas Number

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CHRISTMAS 1897.

THE MILLIONAIRE OF HORNIBROOK ISLAND.

By GUY BOOTHBY,

AUTHOR OF 'DR NIKOLA,' 'THE FASCINATION OF THE KING,' ETC.



It is just possible that there may be more unpleasant places upon the face of this vastly overrated planet than the island which furnishes the latter portion of the name of this story. I must confess, however, that, so far, I have been fortunate enough never to have become acquainted with them. Hornibrook Island, or the island I have disguised under that name, is situated—well, on second thoughts, I don't think I will divulge its real location, and for two good and sufficient reasons. First, because I may, some day, have occasion to revisit it; and second, because you can find it on any map, or in the Admiralty Guide to the Islands of the Western Pacific, and discover its position and its advantages for yourself. Still the fact remains, it is Hornibrook Island, and when you have said that, it is doubtful what else you can find to say about it. To give you an idea of what it is like as a place of residence, I might inform you that at such times as its three hundred and fifty-four white inhabitants have occasion to refer to a certain equatorial kingdom, where most of them believe they possess pre-emptive rights to town lots, they do not call it by

its own historic and more familiar title, but speak of it as Hornibrook Island, and feel convinced in their own minds that they have made themselves understood by everybody.

As for those inhabitants, they are a varied lot, hailing from every portion of the globe, and varied are the professions they follow. Some keep gambling and drinking saloons, while the rest patronise them. There are storekeepers, pearl-divers, bêche-de-mer, tortoise-shell, and tripang gatherers, sandalwood-cutters, owners of trading-schooners, and a sprinkling of beach-combers, whose only use in life, it would appear, is to allow the islanders to feel that there really is a rung in the social ladder below their own, and to lend an air of picturesque local colour to the home letters of such tourists as venture so far off the beaten track as to make their acquaintance. There are also upwards of a couple of hundred other inhabitants, made up of Aborigines, Chinamen, and Manilla, Solomon, and New Guinea boys; but they scarcely count. Except at certain seasons, this hotch-potch of humanity lives happily enough together; during those seasons, however, it must be confessed it is not the sort of place the directors of one's

life assurance society would choose for one to dwell in, except on the payment of an exceptionally high premium. What I mean will be the better understood when I say that the graveyard is situated in a long, damp gully at the back of the town, and is by far the most thickly populated portion of the settlement. Funerals take place as soon after death as possible, and when the ceremony is over—that is to say, as soon as the mud, which they dignify by calling earth, has been poured in—the dear departed is forgotten until the sale of his effects, a day or two later, brings him once more into the remembrance of his friends. The last time I was in Hornibrook Island I was informed by a leading citizen that the place was woefully changed, that it was not at all what it had been in my time. In the six months preceding my arrival they had only had six murders, ten suicides, and three cases of hand-to-hand fighting in the streets. He was a well-set-up, dependable sort of man himself, was my informant, and had the peculiar knack of being able to throw a long-bladed knife with such accuracy as to pierce an ace of clubs pinned against the wall fifteen feet away. He was a shareholder in the graveyard company, so it was said, and every one admitted that he had been at some trouble to stock his property.

On the night I am about to describe to you—one which the majority of the inhabitants of Hornibrook Island were destined in after-days to look back upon with what could only be delicately described as mingled feelings—it was plain that something unusual was affecting the settlement. There was an expression of amused expectation on all the faces one met that was only there when, as in this case, the schooner *Paul and Virginia*, its one connecting-link with civilisation, from San Francisco, put in an appearance, or something equally out of the ordinary run of events occurred. Outside the 'Pearler's Rest' men were clustered together in small knots. They nudged each other, winked, laughed, and afterwards glanced up the strip of moonlit road that ran from the beach away into the centre of the island. Evidently it was from this quarter that the somebody, whoever he might be, who was occasioning the general hilarity was expected to put in an appearance.

His audience, however, had to wait somewhat longer than they expected, for the clock on the second shelf of the bar in the hotel behind them had struck eight before a little stir among those

at the end of the veranda, and a whispered 'Look out, he's coming!' convinced them that they were not, after all, to be defrauded of their fun.

The cause of this excitement was a tall, shabbily dressed man of between forty and fifty years of age, who was coming slowly down the centre of the road, whistling dolefully to himself as he walked. His face, when seen by daylight, was long, thin, and extraordinarily angular—a good specimen, indeed, of the type that is sometimes termed hatchet-shaped. It was in no wise handsome, nor was it improved by the patches of sandy gray hair that grew luxuriantly on either temple. The eyes were wide apart, and somewhat large in proportion to the face; but they were set too deep in the head to be of any assistance in relieving the general effect. His frame was sinewy and spare, his back spoilt by a sad deformity, his arms and legs long and, like his face, very thin. A stranger would also have noticed, as he came closer, that his knees brushed together as he walked, and that he was a little lame on one foot. On his head he wore a large straw-hat, and round his neck a red cotton handkerchief was carelessly twisted. His clothes had once been good, and might have been cut by a fashionable tailor; now, however, they had plainly reached the end of their tether. As far as his personal character was concerned, he was well known to be the best-tempered, the kindest-hearted, as well as the laziest vagabond on the island; and the last accusation should count for something in a place where no one was able to say with truth that he was fond of work. He rejoiced in the name of Gabriel Dollman, and he was accustomed to tell people that he was an American, only son of Millionaire Dollman, and heir to ranches in Texas, town lots in 'Frisco, Chicago, Baltimore, and New York, railroads all over the States, and upwards of five millions sterling in hard cash. Of course nobody believed him for an instant, but that troubled him little. He lived on in the island, after his own fashion, expecting always to hear that the old man, as he called him, was dead, and that he had come into his property. The small community of Hornibrook Island had seen his like and heard the same sort of tale times out of number before. Indeed, they had already known three men who had all claimed to be sons of the same individual. Consequently they were sceptical. Still, it was considered the correct thing to chaff Gabriel on

the subject, and any man who could devise a new practical joke to play off on him might consider himself assured of an appreciative audience.

Little by little the man, for whom the crowd had been waiting, came closer to the hotel. As he drew up at the veranda-steps and prepared to enter the building a change came over the faces of those who remained to watch, and a look of indifference to his presence succeeded what had been pleasurable anticipation a moment before. Many, however, were so overcome by the thought of the fun that was to follow, that they had to retire from view and indulge their mirth where there would be no chance of the victim taking alarm at it. Word had gone round the settlement that afternoon that Judge Casey (a renegade lawyer from the Pacific slope, who had fled to escape a charge of fraudulent trusteeship about to be preferred against him, and who had now settled down as the bully of the island) had prepared a glorious joke, and would play it off on Gabriel during the evening—that is to say, as soon as the schooner from 'Frisco arrived and was at anchor. The joke had been concocted some time before, and as the presence of the vessel in question was necessary to its success, her arrival had been most anxiously awaited by those in the secret.

On this particular evening, however, Gabriel was not feeling cheerful. It was one of his few redeeming points to be passionately fond of children, and of one little girl in particular. This little one was the only child of a pearling skipper's widow, a consumptive woman who, being too poor to rent a house in the township itself, lived in a hut just outside the settlement, within a stone's-throw of the spot where Gabriel himself resided. When he would not do a hand's-turn to help himself, he thought nothing of officiating as nurse and taking charge of the baby all through the hot summer days. He would walk miles through the bush to obtain a flower or a bright-coloured pebble for his favourite, and on more than one occasion he had worked ten hours a day, for days at a time, repairing the thatch of the hut, and had never asked or expected a sixpence in return for his trouble. A few days before this story opens, however, the little one had been taken seriously ill, and now lay almost at death's door; unless certain articles of diet were procured, all of them far beyond the poverty-stricken widow's means, the Doctor had said, as plainly as words could speak, that there was

no hope of saving the baby's life. Gabriel, who, though heir to millions, as he repeatedly informed his friends, had not a halfpenny to bless himself with and no immediate prospect of being able to raise one, had been called in to assist; and he had just left the agonised widow, promising to return without fail in an hour's time with the articles that were so urgently required. He was a sleepy sort of fellow, and not good for very much, but in his heart there was the knowledge that his play-fellow's little life depended on him, and him alone. Therefore it behoved him to procure the articles in question, either with money or fair words, and to return to the hut with all possible speed. Small wonder, therefore, that when he reached the hotel, which was also the principal store of the settlement, he was not in the humour for anything in the shape of a practical joke.

Entering the bar, he was accosted by the skipper of the San Francisco schooner, who held out his hand, and asked him, with a pretence of seriousness, how he did and what sort of luck he had experienced since last they had met. Contrary to his custom, Gabriel offered a laboured reply. His heart was too full of anxiety, and his brain too busy picturing that little maid lying sick unto death in the hut in the bush, to be able to jest in his usual fashion.

Having disposed of his questioner, he passed on to the counter, where the landlord was busily engaged dispensing drinks. Besides being the principal publican and storekeeper of the island, the latter was also the postmaster, and it was from him that Gabriel obtained such letters as any one ever thought fit to write to him.

On this occasion, however, he was destined to experience a disappointment; he was informed that there was nothing for him. But it was noticeable that when he had answered his inquiry the landlord turned to the shelf behind him and seemed for some moments to be occupied in a contemplation of the various bottles with which it was decorated. It may have been that he desired to arrange his countenance before he faced his interrogator again. At any rate when he did so it was as devoid of expression as a human physiognomy could well be.

'That reminds me, Gabriel,' he said after a momentary pause, during which he drew the cork of a lager-beer bottle, 'there was a man from 'Frisco inquiring for you here a while back. He came ashore from the schooner, and said he wanted to see you to-night on

important business. I don't know where he is now, but I reckon Captain Block, sitting over yonder, can put you on the right track, if you ask him.'

It was plain that the significance of his words was not lost on his hearer, for Gabriel suddenly turned pale and clutched at the counter before him.

'Some one wanting to see me?' he said slowly and paused for a moment; adding, as if to himself: 'Well, I reckon it's come at last. And according to the way things are going now, I am glad it didn't happen before. If it had I guess I'd have cleared out of this place long since; then ther'd ha' been nobody to look after little Hetty out yonder. Now, God be praised, she'll want for nothing. I'll take her and her mother away with me, and she shall have the best doctors the States can find. Heaven above us, there never was such luck as that it should have come to-night!'

He paused in his reflections, and turned to the landlord. 'You mustn't think me a softy,' he said; 'but there's a little maid who's mortal fond of me—Gubbins's girl, you know—and the Doctor says unless she can have these things to-night' (here he pulled out a slip of paper from his pocket and pushed it across the counter), 'he reckons she'll not get through another four-and-twenty hours. Well, you know what I've always told you, that I'm the son of Millionaire Dollman of Chicago city. It's plain that he's passed in his checks, and now, as far as I can see, I'm worth close on fifty million dollars, and, if money can do it, I reckon that baby will be saved.'

His feelings must have overcome him, for he picked up the end of the handkerchief that was twisted round his neck, and wiped his eyes with it. A more pathetic figure could scarcely have been imagined, and the effect his words had upon the landlord was equally peculiar. He gave a strange sort of grunt as he turned away; and a sharp listener might have overheard him say to himself, under his breath: 'Well, if I'd have known it, I'll be d—d if I'd have anything to do with it. It's a cussed shame, that's what it is!'

What he would have said further it is difficult to tell, for at that moment a man pushed open the door leading into the front veranda, entered the bar, and approached the counter. That he was not an inhabitant of the island was plainly to be seen. In spite of the heat of the evening, he was dressed entirely in black,

wore a black frock-coat, and his head, wonderful as it may seem, was crowned with a black top-hat. In addition to a pair of black spectacles, he had a long black beard; black gloves covered his hands; and though not a drop of rain had fallen for upwards of two months, he carried in his right hand no less a thing than a black umbrella.

Accosting the landlord, who at the time was busily engaged serving a crowd which seemed to comprise half the white population of the island, he ordered a glass of port, and when this had been poured out for him, proceeded to sip it slowly. Meanwhile every eye in the room was turned in his direction.

'Landlord,' he said at length, with a somewhat affected utterance, 'earlier this evening I inquired from you the address of Mr Gabriel Dollman. I fear I must have misunderstood the directions you were kind enough to give me, for though I have made a somewhat lengthy excursion into the interior of your most picturesque island, I have had the misfortune not to have been able to discover the residence of the gentleman in question.'

Whether it was the redundancy of his language or the bitter sarcasm contained in the latter part of his speech I cannot say, but a titter ran through the room. Those, however, who looked at Gabriel noticed that he had drawn himself up with a new air. It was impossible for them to realise what was passing in his mind, or to understand that the possession of forty million dollars is sufficient to change even the most commonplace individual into a very different sort of person in a very short space of time. Putting down the glass he held in his hand, Gabriel turned and made his way along the counter towards the man who had inquired after him.

'You were inquiring for Gabriel Dollman,' he said, a little nervously. 'That is my name. What is your business?'

The new-comer glanced at him, at first rather suspiciously, and then, having recovered his presence of mind, held out his hand.

'You Mr Dollman?' he said. 'In that case I can only say that I am indeed proud to make your acquaintance, sir. When I remark that this is the first time I have had the pleasure of seeing you, my unfamiliarity with your countenance will not appear strange to you. You do not, of course, know me. That is not to be wondered at. My name, however, will perhaps become more familiar to you when I say that

I am Nicodemus H. Dodge, of the firm of Dodge, Peters, & Dodge, Attorneys-at-law, of Chicago City, U.S.A. Your late lamented father, Erasmus Dollman, millionaire, was one of our most esteemed and valued clients.'

He paused to see how Gabriel would receive his news. But the other only continued to stare at him.

'My *late* father?' he said at length. 'He is dead, then?'

'He passed away from our midst six weeks ago,' said Mr Dodge, wiping his eyes with the extreme corner of a very dirty pocket-handkerchief, 'and I am here to inform you that by his will you inherit all his magnificent property, ranches in Texas and in Arizona; town lots in San Francisco, Baltimore, Chicago, and New York; railroad stock to the value of more than five millions, and close upon ten million sterling in hard cash. If you will allow me to do so, I will congratulate you, my dear sir. I congratulate you with my whole heart and soul, and shall be pleased to act for you in any way you may desire.'

He paused for a moment, expecting that Gabriel would say something, but he was disappointed. The latter was clutching at the counter, deathly pale, and visibly fighting hard to control himself. When he did he turned upon the attorney almost fiercely.

'I reckon you've come only just in time,' he said. 'Only just in time. I've a little friend who trembles on the verge of death. There are things to be obtained for her, and I must have money. Twenty-four hours later and you might have been too late to save her. I'll trouble you for the loan of five dollars.'

This request evidently came as a surprise to the attorney, and he allowed it to be seen that he was disconcerted. However, he recovered his presence of mind with admirable quickness, before the other had noticed his confusion, and, smiling blandly, replied:

'In due course, my dear sir; in due course. Where should we be if we did not attend to the formalities in such matters of business as these? I have here a little paper, to which I shall be glad if you will affix your signature. When that is done I shall, as I said before, be only too glad to serve you in any way you may direct, and to the very best of my ability.'

So saying, he drew from his pocket a carefully folded sheet of blue paper, which he opened and spread upon the counter for the other's perusal. As Gabriel leant over it—for he was

too short-sighted to be able to read anything very distinctly that was not placed close under his nose—the crowd, which had been watching him all the time with expressions of amused expectation upon their faces, drew closer and, looking over his shoulder, endeavoured to read what was written thereon.

A moment later the man stood upright once more. He looked round him with a confused air; then he folded the paper up as it had been given to him, and smoothed the edges with his long thin fingers.

Even now he did not seem to be able to make head or tail of it, but he was to learn the trick that was being played upon him without loss of time. Removing his coloured spectacles and the long black beard which had lent such an air of respectability to his face, the supposed attorney from the United States gave utterance to a shrill whoop of triumph, and revealed to his victim's astonished gaze the countenance of Judge Casey, the man I have already described as the disbarred attorney and bully of the island. The laughter and noise which followed his declaration may be better imagined than described. For a few moments the bar was a pandemonium. Every one laughed, and every one attempted to speak at once. Gabriel alone of those present seemed to have failed to appreciate the joke. Passing through his tormentors with simple dignity and without a word of reproach, he went quietly from the room, across the veranda, and down the steps into the moonlit night outside.

Scarcely heeding which way he walked, he crossed the road and made his way towards the beach. Once there, he seated himself on the sand and tried to think. It would naturally be difficult for a man who a moment before had understood himself to be worth no less a sum than forty million dollars to realise that he is literally without a penny in the world. Had it not been for the jeers, which were still ringing in his ears, he might have believed that he had not been near the 'Pearler's Rest' at all, but had gone to sleep on the sands and had dreamt the whole thing. But the laughter, which he could still hear, told him how detestably real it was. The tiny wavelets rippling at his feet, and the booming of the surf upon the coral reef outside, seemed to echo the scorn. Twenty minutes had now elapsed since he had left the house where the sick child lay, and he had promised to bring back the things the Doctor had ordered within an hour at the latest. What would they think of him if he did not return?

But how could he do so empty-handed? Now that his fortune had vanished and his pockets were destitute of even a copper-piece, he could not imagine how he was going to obtain what he wanted. He required upwards of five dollars, and, as he very well knew, there was not a storekeeper in the place who would dream of giving him credit to that extent. What, therefore, was to be done? It was fully ten minutes before a notion struck him. He had gone over the extent of his worldly possessions, and had convinced himself that he had nothing at all to sell—at least nothing that any one would care to buy. Then an idea occurred to him, and he sprang to his feet. Leaving the beach, he made his way up the road from the jetty to the main street of the little settlement without loss of time. After the cruel hoax which had been practised upon him half-an-hour before, it would have been impossible for him to try and raise a loan on the strength of his paternal inheritance. Indeed, since they so plainly doubted it, he would not have done so even had it been possible. Now he had something in his mind which, if one other person were still in the same way of thinking as he had been some months before, would give him nearly three times the amount he required. He smiled as the idea suggested itself, and then quickened his steps along the sandy track until he reached the house he wanted. It was the residence of the Doctor, the man who was attending the child to whom he was so devotedly attached.

Of all the human derelicts whom the ocean of Fate had washed up on to the shores of Hornibrook Island, there was scarcely one so extraordinary as the individual I am about to introduce to you. He was an Englishman of middle age, a tall, handsome man, almost soldierly in his carriage, and with an abrupt, sharp manner of speaking that seemed to bear out the suggestion just implied. It was in his association with his fellow-men on the island, however, that he gave evidence of the greatest singularity. He had no friends whatsoever, nor, indeed, any acquaintances, even in the most meagre acceptance of the word. He was never seen in the 'Pearler's Rest,' or any of the grog-shanties, save in the practice of his profession, and it is doubtful whether he even knew the names, or the nicknames, of those he was called in to attend. His house was built in the ordinary fashion of the southern seas—that is to say, with a broad veranda running completely round it. Here he lived, entirely alone, his only company being

his books, of which he possessed a library containing more works than had probably ever been seen or heard of by half the inhabitants of the island.

Ascending the steps which led to the veranda, Gabriel coughed by way of attracting attention, and then seeing the medico seated as usual at his table, surrounded by his books, he plucked up courage and, in answer to the other's invitation, entered the room. It was plain that the Doctor was surprised to see him.

'What is the matter?' he asked. 'What brings you here?'

Gabriel stood before him, holding his hat in his hand and playing nervously with the brim. He had a request to make, but he scarcely knew with what words to clothe it. The pause was a long and an awkward one, and it was the Doctor who spoke first.

'Come, come, my man,' he said, 'can't you see that you are interrupting me? If you've got anything to say, I should be glad if you would say it and begone, for I am busy. What is the matter?'

'I am in want of money,' said Gabriel shortly. 'There is nobody else I can get it from, and I must have it to-night—now, within a few minutes, or it will be too late.'

'Well?'

'I thought I would come to you. Six months ago you made me an offer, when you thought I was going to die. I wouldn't listen to you. You offered me three pounds; say five now, and I'll agree.'

The Doctor stared at him for a few moments, running his eye over the other's peculiar figure with that quick, searching look peculiar to him.

'Do you mean it?' he inquired, as he took up a pen and drew a sheet of notepaper towards him. 'Remember, last time you scouted the idea.'

'I mean it now,' Gabriel said. 'I don't know that it is much use to me—at least it won't be then: At any rate I'll chance it. Give me five pounds now and you can do what you like when I'm gone.'

The Doctor began to write, and as soon as he had finished pushed the paper across the table and made the other sign it. When he had done so he counted out five sovereigns, and placed them in a shining heap upon the corner of the table.

'There is your money,' he said. 'Take it and be off. If you're going to drink it, as I suppose you will do, I shall come into my

property even sooner than I expect. I don't know, however, that I've done wisely. Five pounds is a pretty high price to pay for such an experiment.'

'I am not going to drink it,' said Gabriel quickly.

'Then what do you intend doing with it?' the other inquired carelessly.

'You ordered things for Gubbins's little girl,' he said. 'Mrs Gubbins hasn't a red cent to bless herself with, and if somebody doesn't get the things for her the child will die.'

'And you've sold yourself in order that the brat may live!' cried the Doctor, 'surprised in spite of himself. 'These are the days of chivalry indeed. Well, that will do. I'm rather sick of philanthropy, so you had better be off. I'll look round and see the youngster in the morning.'

Gabriel appropriated the gold and placed it in his pocket; then, taking up his hat, he bade the Doctor good-night, and set off with all speed in the direction of the 'Pearler's Rest' once more. Ten minutes later he had made his purchases, and was returning to the lonely hut occupied by Mrs Gubbins and her child. What the widow said to him by way of thanks it is no business of this narrative to divulge, but one thing is very certain—from that hour the child began to improve.

At the end of a fortnight, and by the time the money he had raised had dwindled down to the insignificant sum of half-a-crown, the baby was able to run about as usual, and Gabriel Dollman's heart was at peace once more.

Ever since that terrible night when the cruel practical joke had been so publicly played upon him, he had kept aloof as far as possible from the inhabitants of the settlement. He had no desire to be a further butt for their wit, and though he was not intellectually as bright as some of the keener spirits among them considered themselves, he had more than enough sense to see that, for the reason that he had so calmly endured the insult they had put upon him, he had sunk still lower in their estimation. With the children of the settlement, however, it was quite a different matter. However much their elders might despise him, the little ones did not share their opinion. Almost without exception they were his friends, and by some sort of contrariness appreciated him at his full value. Where their elders could only see a butt for senseless practical jokes and a person upon whom to exercise their petty tyranny,

the children saw a man full of affection and possessed of a fascination second to none. It was Gabriel who taught them to swim in the rocky pools; it was Gabriel who showed them where the different jungle fowl made their nests, who found for them marvellous beetles and butterflies, who knew the best fishing-places, and who could tell the most wonderful fairy stories ever yet listened to by the children of mortal man.

Scarcely a day passed but his hut was besieged by the little ones, and more than once they had constituted themselves his champions when the tide of public opinion had set hard and fast against him. But this was only for the present; a time was coming when the inhabitants of the island were to see him in a new and very unexpected light, and were to learn to appreciate him at his true value.

One never-to-be-forgotten Saturday, three months to a day after that memorable scene in the 'Pearler's Rest,' a schooner put into the lagoon and came to an anchor. She brought with her three Kanakas, whom she had picked up out of an open boat, a degree south of the island. They formed part of the crew of the schooner *Jessie Boyle*. The remainder, having failed to get off, had gone to the bottom with their vessel. They were landed, and next morning at daybreak the vessel passed out of the lagoon and went on her way, leaving a legacy of death behind her. Two days later one of the new-comers developed a sudden and mysterious illness, and within a few hours the man with whom he was lodging followed suit. Twenty-four hours later yet another was taken ill, and then the news got about that the Doctor had declared the disease to be smallpox.

Now, any one who has had experience of those bewitching islands south of the Equator knows what a veritable hell they can become when this dread disease, the one of all others most feared, gets a firm hold upon them. Hornibrook Island proved to be no exception to the rule. The first three cases, already described, soon multiplied into upwards of a dozen, and by the time the number had reached twenty the terror and consternation of the inhabitants may be better imagined than described. Faces which had never been known to blanch at the darkest deeds of violence were now white as cere-cloths when the news came in that yet another and another companion had caught the infection and was not expected to recover. The 'Pearler's Rest' was no longer the rendezvous

of the inhabitants; no longer were the billiard saloons and gambling hells visited by their previous patrons. Men were afraid to meet and mix with each other, lest they too should be stricken down by the pestilence which walked at noonday and carried everything before it. Some put to sea in their luggers, and the boats were found by other vessels, weeks afterwards, with only putrefying corpses on board; others fled into the bush, and were either lost or carried the contagion to the natives; while more, mad with terror, shut themselves in their houses, and refused to come forth until they were compelled to do so by sheer starvation and that strange pluck which is the outcome of despair. At first there were many funerals, conducted, if not with decorum, at least with despatch. Later on, however, these ceased, not from any ignorance of the danger to those who were left, by permitting the bodies to remain unburied, but because there was not one single soul to be found who would undertake the task with its attendant risk. Then, on one never-to-be-forgotten day, the panic reached its climax, and all those who retained possession of their health quitted the township in a body and established themselves upon the hillside overlooking the sea, leaving the sick behind them to take care of themselves as best they might.

On the day that this terrible thing happened, and when men, women, and children were to be seen making their way up the hillside, carrying as many of their belongings with them as was possible under the circumstances, it chanced that Gabriel Dollman, who had been indisposed for some days, left his hut and went into the settlement to procure his weekly supply of provisions. He had heard nothing of the trouble that had occurred, and in consequence was dreading the reception he would receive; but when he entered the main street and found it empty he knew not what to think.

Glancing into one of the billiard saloons, a place of call that seldom had a table unoccupied when the pearling fleets were in harbour, he found it empty. The balls lay about just as they had been left, and, to add to the air of desolation, a large fungus was growing in the centre of the green cloth. Thence he passed on to the 'Pearler's Rest.' The bar, where he had so often been the subject of derisive laughter, was also empty, and in the room behind it the hotel-keeper himself lay stretched upon the sofa, dying. By his side was the

Doctor, cold and impassive as of yore, but nurse or attendant he had none. Realising that at last all was over, and that in this case, as in so many others, there was no further work for him to do, the latter left the room and passed into the bar, closing the door behind him. Making his way to a certain shelf, he took down a bottle of whisky, and procuring a couple of glasses from beneath the counter, poured some of the spirit into them, and invited Gabriel, with a look, to join him.

'What are you doing here?' he inquired when he had emptied his glass and placed it upon the counter. 'Why have you not run away like those other frightened curs? Don't you know that this place is a regular death-trap, and that before you can turn round you may be qualifying for the cemetery yourself?'

Gabriel sheepishly admitted that he had not thought about it, and added that he was not afraid of infection. He said that he had heard somewhere that when you do not feel any fear there is not much danger. The Doctor grunted scornfully.

'If being afraid could induce an attack, there ought not to be a man alive on that hillside at this moment! The cowards! They cleared out of this place like rats from a sinking ship, leaving their friends to sink or swim. Badly as I have always thought of my fellow-men, I don't know that I ever despised them quite so thoroughly as I do now. If one of them had only stood by me I might have done something. As it is, I've got to make what sort of fight of it I can by myself, and, by Jove! it's a harder struggle than any one would imagine.'

They looked at each other for some seconds. After that a silence fell upon them which lasted while a man might have counted fifty. Then Gabriel said slowly and with a little nervousness that was born of the laughter that had been his portion in bygone days:

'Why not try me? I am willing to do my best, and if you are not afraid to run the risk, we might do something.'

The Doctor held out his hand, and for a moment there was almost a gleam of friendliness in his eyes.

'You're a man, Gabriel Dollman,' he said, 'and not a rat. If you're willing to try your hand I'll accept your offer. Do the best you can, and we'll show those beggars up yonder what the two people they have been accustomed to scoff at are worth. They call me the Mad Doctor, I remember.'

Thus Gabriel Dollman was installed as head-nurse. Within an hour of the conversation just narrated he had accompanied the Doctor through the settlement, had marked the houses which were appointed for destruction, had made his plans for burying the unfortunates who had already succumbed, and was carrying cheery, genial sympathy and promises that they would be better in the morning to those who were still living.

Only a few hours before he had been the laziest and in many ways the most useless man on the island. Now he was the hardest-worked and certainly the most willing. Thought of danger he had none, and it was soon apparent that he did not know the meaning of fatigue. Nothing seemed to tire him. He picked up a knowledge of his duties and came to understand what was required of him in a way that was little short of marvellous, until the Doctor, worn almost to death with anxiety and the strain under which he was labouring, could have sat down and cried out in very thankfulness to Providence for having sent him such an unexpected, and at the same time such an entirely admirable, assistant.

In this fashion, for upwards of a month, they toiled on. As fresh cases developed on the hill-side, they were brought down and attended to in the *Inferno* below. Those who died were cheered in their last moments by the man whom they had once so cruelly laughed at and abused, and when all was over and the struggle was finished, it was he who reverently closed their eyes and laid them to rest in the cemetery behind the town. More than once the Doctor had thought it impossible that his companion's meagre constitution could stand the strain, and several times he had been on the point of ordering him to desist from his labours. But the sense of responsibility, that is stronger than any command, had settled itself upon Gabriel hard and fast, and he was no longer the shiftless vagabond he had once been, but a man willing to attempt great deeds, and, what is more, capable of accomplishing them. Though he did not think of such a thing, his enemies were being given into his hand, and he was having a greater vengeance vouchsafed him than he could ever have expected or desired.

At last, however, some faint sign of improvement began to show itself in the fever-stricken settlement. There was a steady decrease in the number of cases, and in such as still remained, the force of the plague seemed in a great measure

to have abated. Strangely enough, the last case of a really serious nature was none other than the man Casey, the originator and perpetrator of the cruel hoax practised upon Gabriel really only a few months, but which now seemed so many years, ago. It was on the twenty-eighth morning after the latter had volunteered to assist the Doctor in his work that they saw the red flag, the prearranged signal that there was another case awaiting their kind consideration. Accordingly they lost no time in ascending to the plateau, where it was their custom to receive and take charge of the patients demanding their care. This particular case, however, was destined to prove a more than usually stubborn one. Day after day, with a patience that nothing could have exceeded, Gabriel did his duty by the sick man's bedside, watching and waiting for the sign that would tell him the corner was turned, and that his patient was on the high-road towards recovery. The Doctor himself came and went with his usual taciturnity. He gave his commands in the same sharp style, saw that they were obeyed to the letter, and all the time wondered what it could be in his coadjutor's constitution that made him able to forgive his enemies in this marvellous fashion.

The same afternoon that the patient was declared out of danger the Doctor burst in upon his assistant with the news that a vessel had passed the passage in the reef and had entered the lagoon. Acting on his instructions, Gabriel went down to the beach, launched a boat, and pulled out to her. For reasons of his own he did not pull alongside, but remained about three boats'-lengths away, and hailed her thence.

'What is the matter ashore?' inquired the mate from the taffrail. 'The place looks deserted.'

'Smallpox,' answered the other laconically. 'We've lost half the number of our mess through it. Don't you come ashore if you're afraid. The graveyard's full enough already. What do you want?'

'We've a passenger aboard who is anxious to land here for an hour or two,' answered the officer. 'He wants to make inquiries about a man who, so he has been told, is living here. There's no telling but what he may be dead of this 'ere blessed disease.'

'What's his name?' inquired Gabriel. 'I've nursed the biggest part of the folk who've been ill, all those who died I've buried with my own

hands, and those who got well again I've helped up the hillside to their friends.'

At this juncture a short, sandy-haired man, clean-shaven and dressed in a suit of white flannel, appeared at the rail, and, after a short conversation with the mate, in his turn hailed Gabriel.

'My name is Pryce,' he said. 'I am an attorney-at-law from Chicago, and I have travelled in this vessel from San Francisco in the hopes of ascertaining the whereabouts of a Mr Gabriel Dollman, who was reported to be living on this island.'

Gabriel's surprise was so great that for a moment he could not find breath enough to reply. When he did he brought his boat a little closer to the vessel, and funnelling his mouth with his hands, as if he feared some of his old oppressors on the hillside would hear him, answered that he was none other than the individual in question.

'You Gabriel Dollman, son of Millionaire Dollman of Chicago?' cried the other in astonishment. 'It can't be possible. Surely you're making game of me?'

'Why should I be?' asked Gabriel. 'I reckon it is not only possible, but it's true. There's the Doctor ashore there and half a hundred others who'll swear to my identity. If you don't believe me, come ashore yourself and find out.'

But this, it appeared, the attorney was not willing to do. And after the gruesome account the other had given of that plague-stricken spot, it is not to be wondered at that he persisted in his refusal.

'Well, never mind,' said Gabriel. 'I guess it'll be all right. I can bring the Doctor off to see you, and when he gets his eye fixed on you I guess you'll believe what he says, if you won't believe me. Now what is it you've got to tell me?'

It was plain that the man did not altogether doubt the sincerity of what Gabriel told him, for when he next spoke it was with an air of respect, that had been conspicuously lacking before.

'If you are Mr Dollman, as you say,' he replied, 'I may as well warn you to be prepared for some bad news. Your father is dead, sir. He was killed in a railroad accident, and in consequence his entire property passes to you, as his sole heir. Provided, therefore, you can establish your identity to my satisfaction, I think I may congratulate you upon the posses-

sion of one of the finest incomes in the world. You will be worth from between forty to fifty million dollars, if a cent. But before I do anything further, I must be satisfied that you are the man you declare yourself to be.'

Gabriel thought for a moment. He did not see how he was to do this without letting the whole settlement into his secret.

'This vessel is *The Pride of the Golden Gate*, is it not?' he inquired.

'That is so,' said the mate. 'I reckon the owners know it.'

'I reckon they do,' returned Gabriel. 'And her captain's name is——?'

'Brown,' replied the mate. 'Horatio W. Brown. He's been in this trade long enough to be remembered.'

'Horry Brown—why, he knows me well enough,' said Gabriel. 'Fetch him up and let's see.'

Captain Brown was accordingly brought up from below. Nobody asked him any questions, nor was there any need for them, for when he walked to the taffrail he saw the man in the boat, and called out:

'Hullo, Gabriel Dollman! What are you doing out here?'

'That's good enough for me,' replied the lawyer. 'If Captain Brown is convinced that you are Gabriel Dollman, I think I may take your word that it is so.'

'Of course he's Gabriel Dollman,' said the skipper. 'I've known him these five years past. Everybody ashore knows him too; he's one of the characters of the island.'

'That may be. But I'm anxious to be certain.'

Dollman put his hand in his breast-pocket and drew out a packet of letters he had brought with him from the hut. These he handed up to the man at the rail, who took them gingerly enough and glanced through them.

'I'm quite satisfied, Mr Dollman,' he said at last, 'and I think I may congratulate you on your accession to your fortune; and if you will draw a little closer I will hand you the papers I have brought for you. I've got them in my pocket now. There is a sum sufficient for current expenses to be paid to you as soon as you please, and I am also instructed by my firm to inform you that they will be pleased to honour your drafts up to any amount you may like to name.'

If one might have judged from appearances, the heir was neither as pleased nor as astonished

as one might have expected him to be. He received the news very quietly, but a sharp observer would have noticed that he glanced involuntarily up at the hillside where what remained of the inhabitants of the settlement were encamped. Then he turned once more to the man on the deck above him.

'I have been expecting this for some time past,' he said simply. 'But it comes upon me as rather a shock.'

'Of course it does, sir,' replied the lawyer respectfully. 'But, bless you, you'll soon get used to it.'

Half-an-hour later Gabriel was making his way ashore, but this time in a very different capacity. He had put off to the vessel a ragged scarecrow of a man, ignorant that he was the possessor of a single sixpence in the world. Now he was returning one of the richest men in the whole scheme of the universe. He did not think of it, but had he done so he would probably have found it difficult to reconcile the fact that his toes were sticking out of his boots with the knowledge that he was the possessor of vast tracts of country in the state of Texas, of whole streets in San Francisco, to say nothing of half-a-dozen other large American cities; or that he was the principal stockholder in more than a dozen of the large railway companies, and a man who had many millions to his credit at his bank.

As he beached his boat he saw that the schooner was weighing anchor once more, and he knew that she was being frightened away by the pestilence which had so devastated the island. Now, unless he, himself, informed his friends ashore, it would be impossible for them to find out that the story which he had so often told them, and which they had always ridiculed as a creation of his fancy, was true after all. He made up his mind before he reached the main street that he would not let them into his secret. It would be time enough for them to know it when the schooner returned, a month later, according to arrangement, to pick him up. Then he would have his hour of triumph. In the meantime he was going to proceed with his work as if nothing had occurred, fortified, however, with the knowledge that he had sufficient capital at his back, without touching a single cent of his investments, to buy up every man, woman, and child upon the island half-a-dozen times over, should he desire to do so. There was a pleasant consciousness about this fact that must have betrayed itself in his face as he

entered the hut where the Doctor was sitting by the bedside of Judge Casey, the man who had caused him to be laughed at so many months before.

'Well, what news had she for us?' inquired the Doctor. 'I see she's clearing out again.'

'They're frightened,' replied Gabriel. 'Captain Brown says he'll be back again in a month's time to see how we're getting on; but he declared he wouldn't stay now, not if he was paid by the minute to do so.'

Gabriel could scarcely repress a chuckle as he reflected that now it would be even possible for him to make such a bargain with the captain. It gave him a feeling of exhilaration to know that, if he desired to do so, he could retain this vessel day after day, and not for a moment feel any strain upon his finances.

That night, when every one else was in bed, he sat alone with his old enemy. The man was terribly weak, and a great deal more dependent upon his nurse than he cared to admit.

'I wonder what's going to be the end of all this,' he said, half to himself and half to Gabriel. 'They tell me that you and the Doctor between you have burnt half the township down, and without asking a living soul's permission.'

'It had to be done, Judge,' said Gabriel solemnly. 'There was nothing else for it. There was infection in every building, and if we'd left them standing for folks to go back to when the plague's died out, why, we'd have had it back with us again before we could have looked round.'

'Well, I don't know that I'm sorry mine's gone,' said the Judge. 'As soon as I am fit to get about again I guess I'll clear out and try my luck elsewhere. Hornibrook Island ain't fitted for my constitution, I reckon. I've never done any good since I've been here.'

He gave a heavy sigh, and then lapsed into silence again. After that, more for the sake of saying something than for any desire of conversation, the other inquired where he thought of going.

'How should I know?' replied the Judge. 'I'd like to fetch up in the States, but that ain't possible. I've got a wife and three kids in Maine that I haven't seen for close upon ten years.'

'Why not?' inquired Gabriel.

'Because I can't go back there,' said the Judge in a burst of confidence that was quite unusual to him. 'There's a certain party that

wants me to the tune of five thousand dollars, and until I can square up with him I daren't show my face there. But it's come pretty rough on me, all things considered; for I was mortal fond of those kids, and the missus, I know, would fetch out the pie when she saw me coming up the street. I'm not an easy sort of fellow to run in double harness with, but there's one thing I can say, and that is true—I never had trouble with her. Take it from me, Gabriel, if you don't think you can quite pull it off with a woman, don't you marry her. Life's not long enough for that sort of hell.'

Gabriel, who was simplicity itself, promised he would be sure not to do so, and then they both lapsed into silence again. This lasted for upwards of a quarter of an hour, and during the time Gabriel busied himself with certain necessary house-work, frowning and winking to himself prodigiously meanwhile, as if he were arguing the pros and cons of some weighty problem. Finally he returned to the bedside.

'Supposing somebody was to hand you ten thousand dollars as a present, Judge,' he said; 'do you reckon you'd be able to pay up that money and get back to your wife in Maine?'

'Just try me,' said the Judge. 'Try me once; that's all I ask. But there's no such luck coming my way. Who's going to give me ten thousand dollars, I should like to know?'

Gabriel sank his voice a little before he answered.

'If nobody else will do it, I guess I will,' he said. 'Haven't I told you before this that there's money coming to me? When it gets here I'll pay your passage home and set you going again.'

An expression of anger flashed across the sick man's face.

'Don't you say it, Gabriel,' he cried imperatively. 'Don't you try to play it on me that way. I can't have it. You've not been a bad sort of a fellow to me since I've been ill, and I don't want to have to say nasty things about you, but if you get trying to tell me any more about that mad-headed notion of yours that you're going to be a millionaire, why, I shall have to talk to you pretty sharp and sudden. If you'd got any sense you'd own up that it's all a lie.'

Gabriel put his hand on the pocket in which reposed the drafts and the papers he had that afternoon received—the documents which so effectually established him in his new position.

'So you still reckon it's a lie, Judge?' he said softly.

'A lie? Of course it's a lie,' returned the other. 'And nobody knows it better than yourself.'

'Oh, well, I don't say anything,' replied Gabriel, with a peculiar intonation. 'You remember that, Judge, when you come to look back on what I'm telling you now. Mind you, I don't say anything.'

When his patient was asleep later on, Gabriel obtained writing materials, and sat down to concoct a wonderful document, which he called his will. The following morning he signed this, with a great air of mystery, in the presence of a couple of convalescent patients, and for the next two or three days went about his business, whistling and chuckling to himself, and forming in his own mind vast plans for the regulation of his future life. But it was not to run quite as he had mapped it out for himself. In the early morning of the Saturday following the day upon which the schooner had arrived with the news, the Doctor was summoned to the hut where the man who had been his right hand through this terrible crisis had installed himself. When he arrived there he discovered that what he had feared had come to pass, for Gabriel was down with the very disease from the clutches of which he had rescued so many others. Thereupon the Doctor, who was none too strong himself, sat down and wept like a child. He had worked shoulder to shoulder with the other for so many weeks, and had become so much attached to him, that to see him now captured by the enemy, just as he thought they were emerging unscathed from their terrible ordeal, was more than he could bear. Two days later Gabriel was delirious; then, by some untoward chance, he caught cold, and complications followed. Whatever the feelings of the settlement may have been before the outbreak of the pestilence, it was at least certain that the news of the man's illness affected them profoundly; for even the hardest among them knew that he owed him a debt of gratitude which nothing could ever repay. In the bitter hand-to-hand fight which was now going on with death, their gratitude, however, was of small avail. At a late hour on the following night the Doctor, who had scarcely left his patient for a moment, realised that the case was hopeless. It was partly due to his feeble constitution, and partly to the strain which the service he had rendered to others had placed upon it. At any

rate Gabriel Dollman was sinking fast. Towards dawn he rallied a little and called the Doctor to his side.

'Doctor,' he said, 'I reckon I'm pretty close up now. Somehow I don't feel much as if I'd care to go on living, and yet, you know, in a fortnight I was going home—home again to the States, where I wouldn't be old Gabriel Dollman, the fool of Hornibrook Island, any more, but just Millionaire Dollman of Chicago city.'

'Hush, hush!' said the Doctor, thinking the other was lapsing into delirium again. 'Lie still and try to get some sleep.'

'Why should I?' asked Gabriel. 'I'll have enough sleep directly, I reckon. I want to talk to you while I've got the chance. Put your hand under my pillow and you'll feel some papers. I want you to take charge of them. One is the will I've made. You'll see that I've named you as my executor, and I guess I know you well enough by this time to feel sure you'll carry it all out just as I wish.'

Seeing the man's condition, the Doctor did as he was directed without a word, whereupon Gabriel laid himself down on his pillow again and fell asleep. Two hours later, and even sooner than the other had expected, the end came, and the soul of the man who had given his life to save others departed from him, bound for a land where his good and evil deeds would be weighed in a just and righteous balance.

After the funeral the Doctor went into his own house and sat down among his books. With a choking feeling in his throat that was not often there, he took the papers the dead

man had given him from the place where they had been put to fumigate, spread them on the table before him, and prepared to examine them with what he tried to make himself believe was a cynical smile. He expected to find an incoherent jumble, but as he read a different expression came into his face.

'Why, what's this?' he cried at last, bringing his fist down with a thump upon the table, and then gluing his eyes to the page once more. 'Good heavens! What blind bats we have been! If these papers are correct—and there seems no reason to doubt them—the man was not mad after all, but was what he pretended to be, and what we would never believe him—a millionaire. By his will he's left enough money to every white man and woman on this island—even to those who bullied and scorned him most—to rebuild their houses, and to start in the world afresh. One hundred thousand dollars he bequeaths to his friend the Doctor in remembrance of the goodwill he bore him, and the remainder of his property he leaves in trust for Hetty Mary Gubbins, daughter of Martha Gubbins, widow, of Hornibrook Island. Three thousand dollars are to be paid to her mother yearly for her maintenance and education, and the balance is to be placed in trust for her until she shall have attained the age of twenty-one years.'

Then the Doctor, who saw the chance of a new life rising before his mind's eye, a life in which the old should be forgotten, rose from his chair, and when he stood erect, said solemnly: 'God bless the Millionaire of Hornibrook Island!'



WITNESS TO THE MARRIAGE.

By W. E. CULE.

CHAPTER I.

FOR some time the conversation had declined. Morden seemed to be taking an absent interest in his cigar-smoke, and I had picked up one of the papers with which the table was littered. It was that morning's *Standard*.

'What are you trying to remember?'

The question startled me by its suddenness. I had been reading an advertisement which had chanced to catch my eye, but when I looked up I found Morden regarding me curiously.

'It is this notice,' I replied, passing the paper across the table; 'the second in the column. It has not appeared previously, nor have I ever met with the names, yet when I read it I felt a strange sensation—a sensation of uncertain remembrance, if I may call it so. In fact, I could almost have declared that I had read it before.'

Morden took up the sheet and scanned the first column. 'Is this it—the Ritford marriage?' he asked carelessly.

I nodded in reply. Removing his cigar for a moment, he began to read aloud:

'A REWARD will be given to any person furnishing information with regard to the marriage of George, Lord Harriden, afterwards sixth Earl of Ritford, to Anna, daughter of Harold Thorne, Esquire, of Wrathley, in the County of Cumberland, which is supposed to have taken place in London early in the year 1790.—HODGES AND BAILEY, Solicitors, Fetter Lane.'

'Come,' said Morden, laying the paper upon the table, 'this is interesting. Do you notice the expression "supposed to have taken place"? It is very much like despair.'

I looked at him inquiringly, and he continued slowly:

'The story has been going the round in legal circles for some time, but I suppose you haven't

heard it. You men of leisure have no need to follow the papers. It appears that this Lord Harriden of the advertisement made a runaway marriage. Anna Thorne was a distant connection of the family, a poor but, of course, charming girl, who had been taken up by his lordship's mother, the Countess of Ritford. She was a kind of eighteenth-century lady's companion, and my young lord knew that his father would oppose the connection with all his might. On the other hand, the estates were strictly entailed, and there could be no cutting off with a shilling.

'He took his own way, naturally, and carried Anna to London. It was equally natural that a disturbance should follow, and he was never allowed to pass the threshold of Ritford Castle again until the Earl's death, which took place five years later. Then he returned in triumph as sixth Earl.'

'So far the story is ordinary enough, but now we come to the matter of the advertisement. The seventh and eighth Earls of Ritford were son and grandson respectively of the husband of Anna Thorne, and the ninth Earl, who has recently succeeded, is his great-grandson. But on the succession of this last it happened that some legal inquiries were made in connection with certain title-deeds. Then it was discovered, to the general dismay, that no proof or record of any kind whatever could be found relating to the marriage of the sixth Earl and Anna Thorne.

'The consequence is,' resumed Morden, depositing the ash of his cigar in the tray at his elbow, 'that a younger branch of the family of Harriden puts in a claim to the title and estates, on the ground that the marriage never took place. The matter will be in the courts very shortly, and it stands thus: the present Earl is searching for proofs, and all the church registers, not only in London, but in every parish in which Lord Harriden is likely to have resided for even the

shortest period, are being thoroughly examined. Now the solicitors are advertising, as you see. It is a last resource, and a poor one at that.'

'Merely a chance,' I suggested.

'Merely a chance,' was the careless answer, 'but probably the only one left.'

I took up the paper and glanced at the advertisement again. The movement reminded Morden of the question which had brought forth his story.

'As for your fancied recollection,' he continued more thoughtfully, 'the sensation is not unusual. I believe most people experience it at some time or other. Sometimes a place which one has never visited before seems to be strangely familiar—a house, a street, or a country-road. Or it may be something you have said—directly you have spoken you feel that you have uttered the same words at some previous time under the same circumstances. There are two explanations of this. One is based on the theory of the reincarnation of the soul, and suggests that the incident really has happened before, in a previous existence, and that the sensation you experience is simply that of a faint memory. That, of course, is a matter for the psychologists.'

'And the other theory?' I asked with interest.

'The other theory is that the effect is produced by some reflex action of the brain, similar to that which produces dreams,' answered Morden. 'That is one of those rational explanations which satisfy nobody.'

I still held the paper in my hand, and now, half unconsciously, I placed a thick pencil-mark opposite the advertisement. Morden saw the action and smiled.

'By the way,' he said a moment later, 'our mention of London churches just now reminds me that you take a deep interest in brasses. Do you know St Sepulchre's Church, Tottenham?'

'No,' was my dubious reply. 'Yet I seem to have heard the name before.'

'Another soul-memory,' he suggested, with a lazy smile. 'Well, I was going to say this. St Sepulchre's is a very small and a very old church in the Norman style. Years ago, I suppose, it was a country village church, but now it is almost lost behind miles of stone and mortar. It has fallen into disuse of late years, but at last its cause is to be taken up. I was sent down there a week ago to give an estimate of the cost of renovation, and I fancy I noticed one or two very decent brasses there. It might be worth your while to go and see

them before they are renovated out of existence.'

'This is interesting,' I said, with some satisfaction. 'I shall be glad to add to my collection of brass-rubbings. My people have been antiquaries in this respect for generations; and there is a tradition that my great-grandfather had a splendid collection, which was destroyed in a big fire some eighty years ago. I should have liked to see it.'

'H'm!' said Morden half enviously as he rose to go. 'It's very nice to have a hobby, but as a rule it is only men of property who can afford it. If you were a poor architect, now—— But there, I must be off. I have to go into the country to-morrow morning.'

He chose a fresh cigar and took a light from mine. I accompanied him into the hall, and assisted him with his coat. Then we stood at the door for a few moments chatting, until the cold air reminded me that it was midwinter, and that I was coatless. Morden saw me give an involuntary shiver. 'Well, good-night,' he said briskly. 'I am keeping you out. Good-night.'

We shook hands for the second time, and I watched him as he passed quickly down the street. But when he had gone some twenty yards or so he paused and turned. His voice rang clear in the frosty December air:

'Don't forget the brasses, Balfour—St Sepulchre's, Tottenham!'

CHAPTER II.



THE sound of footsteps ceased as the care-taker passed out of the porch. The door closed behind her with a grating, hollow sound, and I was standing alone by the old church altar.

But I had seen the brass before! As I knelt to examine it the conviction came upon me with the shock of a sudden memory. I had seen it before.

The little diamond-paned window above the altar had been broken long ago, and the damp and rain had spread over everything beneath until not only the inscription on the brass but the effigy itself was hidden by a dark discoloration. So I was gazing at a blank oblong mass, unintelligible to all until cleaned; but I knew that this was the fair memorial to Sir Thomas de Bollen, a gallant knight who died in the year 1430, at the noble age of sixty-five years. I

saw the deeply engraved figure in complete mail, girded with baldric and cross-hilted sword, the gauntleted hands crossed upon the breast, and the long, straight hair falling back upon the ringed camail. I knew, word for word, the terse Norman-French inscription, as though I had read it yesterday; yet never before had I set my foot in the church of St Sepulchre.

Had I not? As I turned to look behind me the dark little church seemed to grow strangely familiar. The paved aisle and the plain Norman arch; those old windows so quaint and narrow; the now dilapidated oaken pews, high and old-fashioned in the front; the altar near which I stood, with its brazen rail—surely I had seen them before. It was all like a returning memory of childhood—but I knew that as a child I had never been near this place!

The day was closing, and the building was very still. My slightest movement seemed to wake a whispering echo that died reluctantly away, to be followed by a deeper hush. In the failing light, darkening shadows lingered among the heavy pews, behind the massive pillars, and in the gathering gloom of the doorway. And with it all my memory seemed to halt on the brink of a recovery, seemed to be struggling to recall a faded scene, seemed to hesitate at the moment of triumph. So a man hesitates and fails when a familiar name comes upon the lips only to fall at the last instant into the unremembered.

I bowed my head upon my hands. It was coming, slowly but certainly; one moment more and I would remember—remember—remember what?

I started and looked up. The door of the church had been suddenly thrown open. There was a sound of voices without—a hollow echo of footsteps in the porch. Then, amid the darkening shadows, I saw indistinct figures mingle together at the entrance. A minute later these resolved themselves into a small group, and came directly up the aisle. They came slowly and reverently, with soft and measured tread, with the rustling of robes and the sibilant echoes of whispered words.

Even in my surprise some impulse caused me to move aside, and I passed into the shadow of a curtain, unnoticed before, which overhung a doorway on the right. Then I saw four figures pass slowly up to the altar and range themselves about it.

The light from the window fell directly upon

them. One was a tall old man, in the vestments of a priest of the church. He held an open book in his hand, and behind him stood a short figure in black, of which I saw the outline only, on account of the deep shadow.

But it was upon the two other persons of the group that I finally fixed my attention, and I was conscious of no astonishment or fear, either on account of the strangeness of the scene or the startling costumes of the actors. My feeling was simply one of intense interest in what was going on.

The third member of the group was a young man, tall and erect, dressed in the finery of a century ago. On the flaps of his coloured velvet coat I caught the glimmer of silver lace, and he wore dark knee-breeches and low buckled shoes. Beneath the skirt of a long frilled overcoat fell the scabbard of a rapier, and his powdered hair was tied back in an enormous queue.

Beside him stood a woman, who leaned heavily upon his arm. By the light from the window I saw the profile of a young girl, clear-cut and beautiful, beneath the close bonnet, with a single ringlet of golden hair falling on either cheek. She wore the long, clinging skirt which came in at the end of the last century, with the waist-girdle quaintly high. Hers was a slender, graceful form as his was a bold and courtly one, but they were figures of the old time both.

Scarcely had I become conscious of these impressions when the priest began to read, in a thin, quavering voice, from the book in his hand. The light fell upon the open page so that his face was in shadow, but I recognised the words. They formed the opening sentences of the marriage service!

I stood immovable, listening with curious eagerness while the low monotonous voice spoke on. I heard the well-known phrases, so solemn and so beautiful in their solemnity. I heard the responses, given by one of the couple in a clear, decided tone, and by the other in a sweet, faltering voice; and ever and again another voice uttered a sonorous 'Amen' from behind, where the dark figure of the old man stood in the shadow.

I saw them kneel and rise, and watched while the bridegroom took his lady's hand in his own. Then the service drew to its end. The book was closed, and the whole group, led by the priest, came slowly towards the door near which I stood. As they came I drew aside the curtain to let them pass. The clergyman gave me a

questioning glance, and the bridegroom bowed slightly. Then they passed into the vestry.

I stood for a moment with the curtain in my hand, and before I could drop it the old clergyman appeared again in the doorway and addressed me.

'Sir,' he said courteously, 'you have accidentally witnessed the ceremony of this marriage, and though we do not know you, we should feel much favoured if you would sign your name as a witness in the church register. It would save the gossip of the parishioners.'

He turned again, as though sure of my consent. Nor, indeed, did I hesitate for a moment, but followed him in silence into the room. Here, upon a small table, lay a book, open at the first page, while an old-fashioned inkhorn and quill-pen stood beside it. The newly-wedded pair were waiting at the table, and the old man stood behind it.

I saw the clergyman bend over the book, after which he handed the quill to the bridegroom. The bride followed in her turn; and then, at a sign from the clergyman, I stepped forward, received the pen, and wrote in the appointed place my name, Gilbert Balfour, with the necessary particulars. As I did so I casually glanced over the page.

I stepped back, and the bridegroom bowed as he caught my eye—a low courtly bow it was, of the old Georgian days. Then the old man in the background signed his name, and the ceremony was over.

The bridegroom, with a stately step, led his newly-made wife towards the doorway, and the old clerk, after raising the curtains to permit their passage, followed them out. I heard their footsteps on the hollow pavement of the aisle; then there came a faint sound of voices, followed immediately by a ringing of harness, a thud of many hoofs, and the lumbering roll of a heavy coach. Then silence fell once more.

I looked back into the room. The old clergyman had apparently been poring over the register, for now he rose from the table, closed the book softly, and prepared to put it away.

At the farther end of the vestry stood a long, low, oaken cupboard, massive and heavy. Its doors had been opened, and I saw within a number of books piled one upon another. But it was not there that the old man laid the register, though evidently that was its place. He knelt down, and in the next moment I saw that he had opened a shallow drawer in the lower frame of the case, where it rested upon

the floor. In this drawer he carefully placed the book, and I heard a sound of sliding wood as he softly closed it. Then there was a loud, sharp click.

And I started up, to find the care-taker of St. Seyulchre's standing at my side.

'Dear me, sir,' she cried in wonder, 'you must have fallen asleep! I came back to look for the keys, because I thought you had gone and forgotten all about them.'

I was kneeling by the altar before the discoloured cross. There was a coldness and stiffness in all my limbs, and I felt dazed and stupefied. The woman stared at me curiously as I rose hastily to my feet.

'It is strange,' I said, with a shiver. 'I—I suppose I must have been dreaming.'

I tried to collect myself as I brushed the dust from my clothing. I had been asleep, the woman said, and the church was darker now by an hour. I was shivering, too, with the chillness of the stone floor; but the strange vividness of my dream was still with me, and I looked around, half fearfully and half wonderingly.

The eerie sensation which seemed to cling to me was strangely unpleasant. The woman seemed to feel it too, for after a short pause she turned towards the door. I followed her closely, trying to gather my wandering thoughts into a connected memory; but it was not until I had left the building far behind that I succeeded.

Then I paused in the street and passed my hand across my eyes. Dream or no dream, one thing suddenly came before my mental vision as plainly as though I held it in my hand, and that was the sheet of the church register. The written names stood out clear and distinct, and I knew that I had signed as witness to the marriage of George, Viscount Harriden, to Anna Thorne; and the date that I had noted so carefully when I signed my name was the 5th day of January 1790!

CHAPTER III.



It is a most remarkable story, whatever the result may be,' said the Earl of Ritford. 'I have never heard anything more circumstantial.'

He glanced across at the solicitor as he spoke; but that gentleman, who evidently regarded me as something of a visionary, gave a sceptical smile.

'Yes, my lord,' he agreed politely; 'but I am afraid we must not build upon it. As I have said, the registers at St Sepulchre's have already been thoroughly examined, and we find that the first marriage recorded there in the year 1790 was that of a village couple on the 21st of January.'

He looked questioningly in my direction as he spoke, for since I had insisted, against his opinion, that the Earl should hear my story, he had naturally felt some little pique. But as I did not answer his look, he turned to the gentleman who sat beside him, the Rev. Harris Hewson, curate of St Sepulchre's.

'Come, Mr Hewson,' he said, with a slight smile, 'what do you think of Mr Balfour's experiences?'

The Rev. Harris Hewson had been gazing through the carriage window, apparently taking no heed of the conversation. But now he turned with some show of interest.

'When I hear of such matters,' he said quietly, 'I cannot but think of Shakespeare's dictum—there are many things beyond the dreams of our philosophy.'

The Earl nodded in agreement, and the solicitor opened his lips to speak again; but the curate went on:

'And there is one thing to my knowledge strangely corroborative of Mr Balfour's story. In his dream the officiating clergyman appeared to be a man advanced in years. Of course there would be nothing remarkable in that but for the fact that in 1790 the rector of the old parish was the Rev. Peter Godolphin, a man of over seventy years of age. He died early in that year. I have studied the church's history, and this fact has suddenly occurred to me.'

The Earl glanced at his solicitor and then at me; but before he could speak the carriage stopped.

'Here we are,' said Mr Bailey briskly, glad, no doubt, to end the conversation; 'we shall soon know all there is to know.'

We left the carriage, and when Mr Hewson had turned the ponderous key, we passed from the little Norman porch into the echoing church and up the stone-paved aisle.

It was all as I had left it yesterday—dim, damp, and gloomy. Mr Bailey shivered, but the Earl nodded when I pointed out the brass by the altar.

'I see,' he replied, with some interest. 'It seems to be a fine specimen of fifteenth-century

work. I must see it afterwards. But this is the vestry, I suppose.'

'This is the vestry,' said Mr Hewson, quickly leading the way through the now uncurtained door into the inner room. 'This is the vestry, Mr Balfour.'

'Yes,' I answered, making an effort to control my excitement. 'This is the room—the same room; and there is the oaken case which I saw. It contained a number of books.'

'It contains them now,' broke in the solicitor half impatiently. 'We went through them the other week. I have mentioned the result.'

The curate had now unlocked the case, and in a moment more threw the doors apart.

'It was not there,' I said quickly. 'The book was placed in the drawer below. Open that'—

I stopped in confusion, for as I looked more closely I saw, to my astonishment, that the bottom frame of the case was apparently one solid board, of the thickness of an inch and a half. It was carved and ornamented with rude leaves and flowers; but there was no drawer to be seen; neither handle nor knob, nor any sign of a keyhole.

'H'm!' said the solicitor, giving me a glance of quiet triumph. 'This is where we fail.'

I did not answer him, but knelt down before the case, and began to closely examine the bottom frame.

'It is remarkably thick for a single board,' I suggested a moment later.

'It is evidently very old,' replied the Earl. 'Everything was solid in those days.'

'Mr Balfour thinks there may be a secret drawer,' remarked Mr Hewson curiously. 'It would not be at all an unusual thing. Ha!'

For I had been sounding the frame from beneath, testing its thickness and trying the most prominent features of the carving; and at the instant of the curate's exclamation the whole front of the thick board, with its ornamental work and tracery, came away in my hands.

I had touched the spring and revealed the secret. The bottom of the case was composed of two boards instead of one, and the carved oak facing was nothing but the outer work and shield of a shallow drawer, which ran the whole length and width of the case, and fitted exactly into the cavity. And in this drawer, exactly as I had seen it placed, lay a large book, similar to those on the shelves above!

My companions bent over it; but I was so taken aback, in spite of my confidence, by the

suddenness of the discovery that I could not take it up. Then the solicitor, with shaking fingers, tried to open the covers.

'Take care,' said the Earl huskily. 'It is damp. There!'

It lay open before us: but the letters on the page swam before my eyes, and I could not distinguish them. There was a short, painful silence for a minute; then the Earl gave a deep sigh of relief.

We were grouped together, kneeling upon the damp stone floor. It was Mr Hewson who spoke first.

'This is the proof,' he said, with quiet satisfaction. 'Peter Godolphin has signed here, and his clerk, William Baker. No doubt the old man saw that the marriage was an unusual one, and thought he would keep the record in safety; but he died almost directly afterwards, and when the next marriage took place they had to begin a new register, because this one could not be found.'

'That explains it, of course,' said the Earl of Ritford. Then he went on in a lower tone: 'But look at the name of the other witness. Mr Balfour, look!'

I bent my eyes upon the page, but, owing to my agitation, could not decipher the faded writing.

'It is your name, sir! Look!' put in the

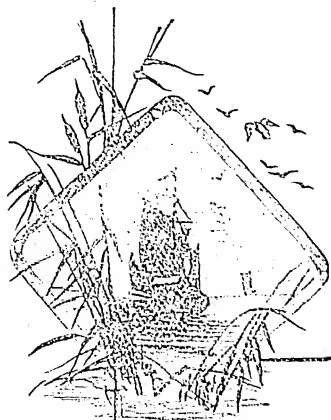
solicitor, testily. 'See—Balfour—Balfour—your signature!'

I stared from one to another as they gazed questioningly into my face. The whole incident, from the moment I had seen the advertisement in the paper, passed swiftly through my mind, with its strange memories and stranger mystery.

Then my experience of yesterday—had it been simply a dream, or a vivid flash of mysterious memory, so complete, so perfect, that it had given life and reality to a scene that had lain forgotten for a century? Had I written that name myself in some dead past, or was this but some supreme coincidence, some terribly fantastic turn in the mazes of chance?

And suddenly I felt that I knew, remembering Morden's remarks, remembering the struggles of recollection and my late inexplicable convictions. I felt the blood rush to my heart with the shock, and I saw a growing wonder, which was more than wonder, in the faces of those about me. May Heaven forgive me if I answered their questions wrongly, if I made a startling mystery of what was capable of simpler telling. I have yet to learn a better answer.

'No,' I faltered. 'It is the signature of my great-grandfather, Gilbert Balfour, diamond merchant, antiquary, and brass collector, of The Minories. He died in 1803. It is his signature—and—and it is mine!—I know it is mine!'



THE LAST VOYAGE OF MARTIN VALLANCE:

A SEA STORY OF TO-DAY.

By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY,

AUTHOR OF 'STEVE BROWN'S BUNYIP,' 'IN THE GREAT DEEP,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

OVERBOARD.



HAD been at sea eight years. As a boy, innate love of romance and Marryat's novels had sent me there. Otherwise, there was no particular necessity for such a step. My father held the living of Compton-on-Tor in South Devon, and was rich enough to have given me a choice of professions. Nor in all those eight years did I once encounter the romance I had fondly imagined was the inevitable lot of the seafarer—the romance of incident. Indeed, a more humdrum, matter-of-fact life could scarcely be conceived, with its inevitable recurrence of headwinds and fair, gales and calms, long passages and short. Actually, so far as my memory serves me, throughout those years the most exciting matter that happened was the carrying away of an upper foretop-sail-yard. Still, if I was not altogether satisfied with the regular routine of the hard and monotonous profession I had so wilfully chosen, I loved the sea itself beyond anything, and was never tired of studying its myriad moods, and attempting to interpret the language of the many tongues with which it spoke to the wanderers upon its mighty breast.

Although 'a passed master,' I had not yet been lucky enough to get a better billet than a second mate's. Ships, comparatively, were few, and officers as plentiful as blackberries in a good season; and I was considered fortunate when a berth as second mate, at £5 per month, was offered me on board the *Antelope*, a 1000-ton ship bound from London to Fremantle in Western Australia. I hardly took the same view of things, and had quite made up my mind, as it was rather late in the day for

choosing another path in life, to do as so many others were doing, and 'change into steam.'

Five-and-twenty shillings per week, after eight years' servitude given to the mastering of an arduous and fatiguing profession, and one in which the disparity between remuneration and responsibility was so vast, appeared, even to my mind, to leave something to be desired. As for romance, that had all been pretty well knocked out of me, and I had ceased to look for or expect anything of the kind. The ocean, clearly, had altered, and been modernised to suit the times—brought, so to speak, sternly 'up to date,' and had, save for a few rare outbreaks, taught itself to recognise that fact, and behave as an every-day, commonplace piece of water should. This, at least, is what I thought whilst I paced the *Antelope's* deck as she went roaring down the Channel with a fair wind behind her, her Plimsoll mark just awash, and three lower topgallant-sails standing out against the clear sky like concaves of sculptured marble. About the ship and my shipmates there was nothing more particularly noticeable than there had been in half-a-dozen similar ships and ships' companies I had sailed with. Of course, in detail, they varied; but, take them full and by, skipper, officers, crew, routine, rig, and provisions, there was the usual family likeness. Merchant-captains commanding vessels like the *Antelope* are as often as not, in these modern times, gentlemen. Captain Craigie was one; and the chief mate, Mr Thomas, was another. Both were scientific and skilful navigators, and both officers in the Royal Naval Reserve. The ship herself was a flying clipper, steel-built; crew mixed; provisions fairly good;

every prospect of the usual dull and eventless voyage to 'Down Under' and back again. It was my last at any rate, and it has given me quite enough to talk about for the rest of my life, and especially when any one happens to remark in mine or my wife's hearing that there is no romance in the sea nowadays.

I am not going to say anything more about the *Antelope* just now, because this story doesn't concern her very much, and after I left her so suddenly, Captain Craigie and three of her men were the only recognisable members I ever again saw of the ship's company.

And now, having cleared the way a little, I will heave ahead with my yarn, by reading which you will see that, even in the present prosaic age, curious things may happen to those who do business in great waters; and may also realise that Mother Ocean has lost nothing of her old-time power, when she chooses to exert it, of staging romantic scenes, and incidents grotesque and tragic and mysterious.

We had called at Capetown, after a fairly quick run from the Lizard, to land a few passengers and take in a little cargo; and, in place of keeping away to the southward, the captain stood along the 26th parallel. In doing this he ran a risk of meeting with light and unfavourable winds. But that was purely his business. We were just now in that sort of No Man's Water between the Indian and South Atlantic Oceans shunned by sailors, and used only by a few steamers. Our position at noon had been 45° 15' east longitude, 36° 13' south latitude, or about 1300 miles from Capetown. The night was dark and squally when I came on deck to keep the middle watch, and as I stumped the poop, listening to the wind, that seemed every now and then to shrill with a deeper note in the roar of it aloft amongst the canvas, there came a cry of 'Light on the lee bow, sir!' from the man on the fore-castle-head, an ordinary seaman. But, peer as I might, I could see no light. So, descending the poop-ladder, I walked along the main-deck, and jumped on to the rail just before the fore-rigging, and leaned out-board in order to get a better view. The seaman stood on the break of the fore-castle, a dark figure rising and falling with the vessel's head against the patchy sky. 'Where away, my lad?' I asked. 'There, sir,' answered he, pointing.

I was holding on, carelessly enough, to some of the running gear—jib-halyards probably, and

not to the standing rigging, as I should have done. I stared, and leaned over farther still. 'A star, you mutton-head!' I exclaimed, as my eye caught what he was after—the yellow glint of Antares, just on the extreme rim of the horizon. The words were scarce out of my mouth when I felt something 'give' aloft, and in a second I was in the boiling, foaming backwash of surge alongside.

As, gasping and choking, I came to the surface again, the first thought that flashed across my brain was that the ship was still reeling off her thirteen knots, and that I, Martin Vallance, was no better than a dead man. Swimming with one hand, I squeezed the brine out of my eyes with the other, but so dazed and stunned was I by the amazing suddenness of the affair that I could see nothing, looking, possibly, in quite the wrong direction. There was a nasty, short, choppy sea on, too, and I found it took me all my time to keep afloat. Then I raised my head and shouted, but with poor heart. I knew so well the almost utter uselessness of it. What merchant seaman under like conditions ever gets picked up? And I mentally followed the course of events on board. The lookout—a lad on his first voyage—after a minute's gaping astonishment, roars, 'Man over-board!' The watch on deck, skulking in snug corners, rush sleepy-eyed to the rail and stare. In my case, as officer of the watch, it was worse than any one else's. Most likely the mate would have to be called before any measures were taken. Certainly the fellow at the wheel might put it hard over, but that would do no good. And by this time the ship would be a full three miles away. Probably, after some twenty minutes' hard work with covers and gripes, a boat would be lowered, pull about aimlessly for an hour, and then get aboard again. In the morning the log-book would show my epitaph: 'On such-and-such a date, longitude and latitude so-and-so, a gloom was cast over the ship,' &c.

All this worked in my mind as, turning my back to wind and sea, I swam slowly and mechanically along, thinking whether it might not be as well to throw up my hands at once and go down instead of lingering. But I was young and strong; and, heavens! how passionately the love of life runs in such a body when there seems to be a chance of losing it! And surely, I thought, there must be a buoy or two somewhere. So I kept on. Fortunately I had only light shoes in place of sea-boots, but my

pea-jacket felt as if it were made of sheet-lead. The first sudden shock and surprise over, my thoughts turned to, and worked collectedly enough, even to the extent of arguing, pro and con, whether or not it was worth while to go to the trouble of taking my coat off, as I could have done, for I was at home in the water. Presently, standing up, I strained my eyes in another long look around. But I could hear nothing except the moaning of the wind, see nothing except the white tops of the short waves as they came snarling and hissing around me; these, and, overhead, the vast concavity of ragged darkness, lit here and there by a few stars. I stared in the direction I now knew the ship should be. But there was no sign. A man's vision in a tumble of a sea has not time to settle itself to reach very far. Still, I thought I might have seen a light had they shown one. As I turned, with a short prayer on my lips, determined to swim till I should sink from pure exhaustion, I heard something come down on the wind like the cry of a child—'Ma-ma-ma-a-a!' changing into a long querulous bleat that seemed very familiar. Staring intently in the direction, after a while I made out some dark object, now looming as big as a boat on the crest of a wave, now hidden altogether in a water-valley. A few minutes more and I was alongside it, clutching the wet and slippery sides, whilst from its interior proceeded a volley of plaintive callings. I recognised the thing now; and as I caught hold of one of its stumpy legs and dragged myself on top, and lay at full length, panting and nearly spent, I blessed the sailor-man who had made such good use of his opportunity.

Whilst in Capetown the captain, who was ailing, had been prescribed a diet of goat's milk and rum, or, at least, frequent doses of the mixture. The rum we had plenty of aboard; and the skipper soon got a fine goat, newly kidded, from one of the farms round about. He also bought from an Indian trader, then in harbour, a four-legged massive animal-pen, iron-barred, strong as a house, and almost big enough for a man to live in. This structure, its supports 'razeed' by our carpenter, and at first placed aft, was presently, because of Nanny's wailings when, every night, her kid was taken from her, shifted forward and lashed on the pigpens close to the door of the topgallant fore-castle, in which the sailors lived. Now what annoyed us aft annoyed Jack forward just as much, and there were consequently growls, deep and long, from the watch below. And

I saw what had happened as clearly as if I had been there. In the rush and hurry consequent upon my tumble things had been thrown overboard at random; and a sailor, seeing his chance, slashed through the lashings of Nan's pen, waited for a weather roll, and with a push, gave it a free passage. Flush with the rail, as it was, its own weight, almost, would have taken it over. Thus in one act did the ship lose an officer from aft and a nuisance from forward. And even whilst lying across the bars that formed the front of the cage or pen, dripping like a wet swab on to Nan, who, silent now, was trying to nibble my toes, I could well picture the skipper's rage when he missed his goat. Of course he would be sorry for me too. We had always been good friends. But then I could be replaced at once (there were in the *Antelope* at least three mates before the mast), the goat not at all.

Luckily for Nan and myself, too, the pen had fallen on its back, and rode face to the sky, so high and dry, except for a swish of spray now and again, that I had no need to loose the canvas curtains which were made to fasten over the bars in bad weather. Putting my hand down, I felt her skin, warm through the wet hair, and you wouldn't believe how grateful that touch was to my chilled and sodden body; ay, and how comforting, also, to my heart, just now so utterly devoid of hope, was the sense of that dumb companionship. And though I knew that, barring something very like a miracle, my hours were numbered; still, compared with my condition so lately, here was, at least, a reprieve. I have already said that the *Antelope*, in place of stretching away to the southward for a westerly wind, as most vessels would have done, had kept well up towards the Indian Ocean, making, in fact, a nearly straight line for her port. This was in one way a gain for me, in another a distinct loss—the former by assuring me of warm and most likely fairly fine weather; the latter by taking me quite out of the track of outward or homeward bound shipping. Had I gone overboard amongst the huge, ice-cold combers of the South Atlantic in forty-five degrees or thereabout, I should have been food for the fishes long ere now. All these matters I turned over in my mind as I lay at full length, with room to spare, and gave Nanny a hand to suck, and longed heartily for daylight.

As the night slowly passed, the jump of a sea that had been shaking the soul out of me went down perceptibly; the wind, too, blew warmer

and more lightly. Of seeing the *Antelope* any more I had no hopes. By the stars I could tell I was drifting to the northwards, and quite away from her course. Still, the captain might stand by through the night, and with a look-out at the royal mast-head, they might possibly sight me. A forlorn chance! And, indeed, when at last the sun rose gorgeous out of a great bank of opal and purple, and balancing myself like a circus-man, I stood up and took in the horizon, and the sea that ran to it, foot by foot with my smarting eyes, I could see nothing. Nanny and I were alone on the wide and empty ocean, and evidently travelling in the set of some current. And it was owing to this, probably, that I was not sighted in the morning; for the ship had actually shortened sail and stood by the whole night through, tacking at intervals, so as to keep as near the spot as possible. So they told me afterwards. It was more than many a captain would have done, goat or no goat. And I was the better pleased on a certain very momentous occasion, of which you will hear in due course, to be able to make my acknowledgments to my old captain and thank him for his humanity; also to help him a little, in his own time of need, in a different fashion. However, this last is an affair that concerns not the story.

Of Nan, previously, I had never taken much notice. Now, as I looked down, I saw that she was a great strapping lump of an animal, in fine condition, with a well-bred, good-tempered head, bearing a short, sharp pair of horns; and a queer squab of a tail that she carried in a jaunty sort of curve over her backbone. She was mostly black in colour, with a big white patch here and there, and she kept her legs straddled to the heave of the sea like an old sailor, and stared up at me with a pair of big, black, bewildered eyes as who should say: 'Where's my child? And what's become of the steward? And what's this row all about?' And, sad and sore as I was, I couldn't for the life of me help grinning as I looked at my shipmate. All at once, underneath her, I caught sight of three circular brown objects; and suddenly I felt hungry. All day long the skipper used to stuff Nan with white cabin bread, lumps of sugar, fancy biscuits, and such-like, for she'd eat anything. And at times the men, perhaps by way of contrast, would throw her a bad biscuit out of their own barge. At the present moment there were three of these under Nan's feet. I stretched an arm down, but could not reach them by a full

six inches. Nor could I open the door, forming as it did half of the front of the pen, without the risk of Nan jumping out. At last, after many vain efforts to finger them, taking the kerchief off my neck, I tore it into strips, joined them, and bending my knife to the end, managed to harpoon one. It was soft and sodden with sea-water, and full of dead weevils; but it tasted delicious. I offered a bit to the goat, but she only smelled at it and stamped her foot, snorting indignantly.

'All right, my lady,' I said; 'perhaps your stomach won't be so proud as time passes!' And I secured the others in the same fashion, and stowed them carefully away in my pocket.

It was a real comfort to have something to talk to, although it could only answer me with impatient coughings and cryings as it scuttled to and fro, standing up now and again to nibble and pull at my clothes through the bars. Even that took away the dismal sense of loneliness and desolation induced by the look of an empty ocean all around running to an empty sky.

CHAPTER II.

THE CUTTER.



AND now the weather took a thoroughly settled sort of look—blue sea, blue sky, and the sun just hot enough to be grateful. A light but steady breeze blew from the south-west; and in place of the short, choppy waves of the previous night was a long, oily, unbroken swell, over which we rode fairly dry, and showing two feet of a side, with, clear of the surface, a couple of stumpy outriggers, where the carpenter had cut down the tall legs of the pen when it came on board the *Antelope*. The two lower ones were of course, under water.

Since meeting with Nanny I had felt quite hopeful, almost cheerful, indeed. Twenty-four, strong as a young horse, sound as a new bell, with eye of a gull and digestion of an ostrich, doesn't stop in the dumps very long under any circumstances; and I sat in the sun, and stared round the horizon, and talked to Nan, whilst our ungainly craft tubbed about, yawing, and slueing, and lolloping over the regular seas. Still, the salt biscuit had made me thirsty, and my throat was like an overboiled potato, when, towards midday, clouds began to rise in the west, slowly at first, then with such rapidity that all the

sky in that quarter soon became as black as an ink-pot. I had just taken a dip overboard, and was munching a finger's-breadth of biscuit to still the inward grinding, when, as I glared thirstily at the huge darkness that was creeping gradually over all, thick and dense, as if it meant to blot out sea and sky for evermore, my eye caught a glimpse, on the edge of the storm-curtain, of something showing white against the gloomy background. Standing up, I saw it more plainly. It looked like a ship's royal or a boat's sail. That it was no flicker of sea-bird's wing or breaking crest of a wave I was certain; although, even as I told myself so, it was gone—engulfed in that profound blackness, beginning now to enfold me and spread to the farther horizon, whilst streaks of vivid lightning and low mutterings of thunder heralded the approaching storm.

The wind had died entirely away, and the gloom was so thick I could hardly see to cast adrift the curtains of the pen and fix them snugly over the bars. But for these things—made to protect Nan from the spray on the *Antelope* in heavy weather—we should have been done, for I was certain that enough water was going to fall in the next few minutes to sink the cage. As it was, I felt nervous about the result. I had thought there was no wind in the storm. But I was wrong, for presently a low, white mound showed itself advancing from the edge of the horizon, quite discernible with the play of the lightning upon it, and travelling swiftly towards me, roaring with a mighty noise of wind and water as it came. Thunder pealed and crashed as if the foundations of the ocean were breaking up, whilst the heavens glowed with such continuous flames of electricity as made the eye wither to look upon. I had never in all my experience seen anything like this. And I pretty well gave myself up for lost—feeling in that moment neither hunger nor thirst—as the wall of wind-swept water roared upon us and took the pen up and threw it in the air, and whirled it round and round, and hither and thither in a cloud of spume and hissing, pelting foam, till, as I lay, my hands gripping the legs of the pen and my toes stuck through the canvas cover, I grew sick and dizzy with the motion and turmoil, and expected each minute to feel the cage capsize, fill, and go down. But with that first great wave the worst was over, and Nan and I were still right-side up.

And now, at last, down came the rain, not in drops, but in such solid sheets as fairly

bore me flat, beating the breath out of me as I stretched face downwards and listened to the water pouring off me like a cataract. But I was glad, for I knew the fall would quiet that venomously hissing sea, that seethed and raged so close to my soaked and battered body. As the first weight passed I opened a corner of the tarpaulin and peered at Nan. She was crouching in one corner, and there was far more water washing about than I fancied the look of, considering that I had nothing I could use as a bailer. Also, the pen had sunk appreciably under the added weight of fresh water and salt.

In an hour the storm had gone, the sun shone out, and a nasty tumble of a sea got up, one of those criss-cross seas that seem to come from all quarters at once—a sea that speedily made a half-tide rock of my refuge, and threatened to fill it completely in another hour or two more. As to wind, there was none to bother much about; and I was getting the benefit of the released sea, held so long under by its iron hand. Presently, to avoid being swept off, I had to change my position, and now I stood on the bottom leg up to my waist in water, and hung on to the top one—a precarious business, to say nothing of sharks. Every few minutes a couple of chopping seas would make a rendezvous of the pen, and, meeting, break clean over it, half smothering me, and, as I could plainly feel, each time putting more water inside. At this rate of going, I considered that less than an hour would finish matters, unless the wretchedly wild sea went down.

I had been straining my gaze to the horizon, when, gradually bringing it round, I saw something over my shoulder that made me actually yell with the surprise and delight of it. There, not two hundred yards away, nodding and dancing to the chop, was a fine big lump of a cutter-rigged boat, her foresail hauled down and partly hanging in the water over the bows, the mainsail and gaff heaped along the boom. Over the latter spar leaned a couple of men clad in blue cotton dungaree, looking straight at me, but giving no sign. Their features were dark, and as their arms hung down over the sail the sunshine glittered on some bright objects, apparently held in their grasp. Climbing on to the pen, I shouted at the top of my voice and waved my arms. But they never stirred, and I thought I could make out, even at that distance, a sneering expression on their livid faces. Again I yelled; ay, and cursed them, and shook my fist at them, for the boat was

passing me, blown along before the wind—passing me at right angles, a beautiful model of a craft, her white side, with its narrow gold beading, glistening wet to each heave of the straight stem. A regular dandy of a boat, never built, it struck me even at that moment, to be carried on shipboard. My God, how swiftly she was getting away from me! Evidently there was only one thing to be done, but I hesitated. The stolid cruelty of those dark faces scared me. Would not such villains be apt to take pleasure in repulsing a drowning man who came to them for rescue? Then I laughed aloud.

What could it matter how the end came, when come it must if I stayed where I was? And without further thought I stripped, plunged in, and swam for the boat. I was weaker than I thought; and the cross sea took a lot of getting through. Also, the boat was farther away than I supposed her to be, and had it not been for the sail acting in great measure as a drag, I doubt whether I should ever have done the swim. As it was, when at last I grasped the sodden canvas, all I could do was to hang on to it, panting convulsively, and not knowing when boat-hook or hand-spike might descend on my head. A minute or so's rest, and then, painfully crawling over the bows mother-naked as I was, I staggered aft. The pair still stood in the same position, close to each other, staring steadfastly seaward, their backs towards me, in the natural, easy posture of men resting. Were they drunk, or blind, or deaf and dumb? I wondered, as I stood there, on the break of the little half-deck, staring down at them. And then, my eyes travelling along their bodies, a great hot sweat broke out, tingling like prickly heat all over me, and I reeled back in dismay as I saw that, from the hips downwards, they were the colour of saplings charred by a bush-fire!

Black as ink, without a stitch of clothing, ran four straddling, shapeless stumps that had once been thighs and legs—black as ink they ran into the foul rain-water that washed between them in the boat's bottom. A truly desperate and awful sight, and one that made me feel sick and ill as I gazed alternately at the burnt supports and the fleshy trunks above them. The horrible spectacle took all the stomach out of me, perhaps because that organ was so miserably empty just at the moment. Anyhow, it was some minutes before I mustered courage to step across and face that grisly pair. God only knows what colour their skin had originally been, but now

it was a horrid purplish blue. They had stiff, scrubby black hair and beards, and were so much alike they might have been brothers.

In more than one place on breast and arm I caught sight, through the slashed dungaree, of scarce-healed wounds, telling of wild work not long since. On each hip lay, in its curved sheath, a murderous-looking knife; and from a steel cuff on each of their wrists hung a small chain—some of the links fused and melted as if in a furnace. These were the bright objects I had noticed. And they doubtless formed a key to the tragedy, or at least to part of it. Snugging their boat in the terrible storm of the morning, the pair had been struck by lightning and instantly shattered and withered as I now beheld them. But before that? I could not give a guess even—mutineers, pirates, convicts? Well, here was romance at last, of a sort, good measure, heaped up, more than enough to satisfy me for those humdrum years that had passed!

The boat was larger than I imagined. Decked better than half-way her length, giving her a cabin with handsome doors, facing a space aft—a sort of well, wherein was a small binnacle, and around which ran lockers—I should have taken her for a pleasure-boat, built for use and rough weather; or one belonging to some government official who had to run out to sea, or down a harbour to meet ships. Certainly, no sort of vessel that I was acquainted with carried such a craft on her deck. But, wherever she hailed from, she looked a sound, fast, wholesome boat, and more than a handful for any one man to manage; also, decidedly not the property of those two silent ones. All these thoughts passed through my brain in less time than it takes to put them down. Indeed, whilst thinking, I was busy hauling the foresail on deck, not without, I must confess, more than one or two nervous glances over my shoulder. Then stepping gingerly aft, I looked around for the pen, having no idea of deserting a shipmate in distress. For some minutes I could not see it; and when at length I picked it up, I was astonished to find what a distance away it was, and what a mere speck it appeared on the sea. Taking its bearings by the compass, I paused, reluctant with disgust, at the next job on hand. But it had to be done. I wanted that mainsail, and yet I hated to touch those forbidding figures gazing silently over the sea with lowering, hideous faces.

Easing off the mainsheet, I thrust the boom to leeward. But they were not to be got rid of

in that fashion, and they hung on with a terrible tenacity that dismayed me. As I stood watching in half-hearted fashion, the boat gave a sudden swerve, bringing the boom back again, and causing the bodies to hit the side of the cutter violently; and, to my horror, the lower parts of each of them snapped short off carrotwise, whilst the trunks swayed to and fro like pendulums on the spar. This sort of thing was not to be borne, and, with desperate energy, I picked up the halves—they were as light as corks—and hove them overboard. Then, grasping the body nearest me, I dragged at it, having to exert all my strength to make it let go its hold, and served it the same way, the belt and sheath slipping over the exposed hip-bones as I did so. Tackling the other one, I pulled too hard, and it came away with a swing, and, turning, flew to me, resting on my bare breast.

Shaking myself free with a shout of terror, I pitched it overboard. I was trembling all over, and the sweat ran down my body in streams. Never, in my worst nightmare, could I have imagined such a gruesome contract as the one I had just finished. With a feverish eagerness to be gone, I cast the gaskets loose, hoisted the mainsail, rattled the foresail up, got the cutter before the wind, and kept away for Nan and the pen—bearing a good couple of miles abeam.

She steered like a clock; and though the breeze had dwindled to a mere light air, she slipped through the easing tumble at a rate that soon brought me alongside my first refuge. 'Hurrah, Nan, old woman!' I shouted, whilst I quickly got into my clothes; 'here we are again; never say die; for neither of us was born to be drowned!' 'Ma-a-a,' bleated poor Nan as I rolled back the tarpaulins and, with some trouble, threw open the big barred door. On my calling her, she was out on top of the cage in a second, and after just one sailor-like stare around, watching her chance, she hopped into the boat as clean as a whistle, although it stood full four feet above the cage, and bad footing both ways. A rather dilapidated-looking goat she was, too, with chafing sores on hips and shoulders, and her coat all brine-roughened and matted. But there were lots of life in her still, and she made the deck rattle as she scampered fore and aft, bleating at the top of her voice.

Dowsing the sails, I made fast to the pen for a time whilst I did a little exploring with a view to food and drink, which, Heaven knows, we both needed badly.

First, with a bucket, I baled the water out,

not liking the feel of the greasy splashing between my legs, any more than the suggestive dark colour of it. Then, opening the door of the little cabin, I crouched in, closely followed by Nan. The interior was low, and dimly lit by a couple of glass bull's-eyes in the deck. There were no bunks, but all around ran a cushioned seat, covering, as I soon found, lockers full of odds and ends. On the floor were some rugs and blankets; an empty demijohn, smelling of rum; some tin pannikins and plates; mats of Indian manufacture; long black Trichinopoly cigars; woven bags of grass, containing betelnut and withered areca-leaves for chewing, together with many more signs of dirty native occupation. But everything was scattered about in the wildest confusion. A handsome little lamp swung from a bracket, and lighting it with a match from a big tin boxful in one of the lockers, I was enabled to see more clearly. And now I noticed ominous black patches on the brown leather of the cushions, and the floor was simply piebald with them. Also, I picked up a couple of great sheath-knives covered with rusty-brown stains from haft to point. Undoubtedly there had been murderous work done in that little sea-room. Opening some of the lockers, I found preserved meats, a few bottles of rum, a great bag of cabin biscuits, a lump of cold salt junk on a tin dish, a jar of some sort of wine, another of molasses, more cigars, a whole cheese, a string of onions, and one locker was nearly full of sweet potatoes, at which Nan sniffed approvingly. Perhaps what pleased me most of all was, lashed right in the eyes, a big cask of water, which, on sounding, I found over half-full.

Carrying an armful of provisions, I went out, glad to breathe the fresh air after that of the cabin, which smelled stifling with an odour of rum, stale cigar-smoke, murder, and sudden death.

But Nan seemed uneasy, and in place of eating the potatoes and biscuit covered with molasses (one of her special weaknesses), she started to butt me and sing out complainingly. At last, losing patience, I was about to tie her up, when my eye fell on her udders, swollen near to bursting; and, sailor though I was, I felt that something wanted easing. So, taking a basin, I set to work, awkwardly enough I dare say, but effectually; and Nan, relieved, presently made great play with her food.

And what a meal that was! Never have I eaten one like it since! Nor, I suppose, shall I ever eat such another—I mean with the same

relish and appetite. For twenty-four hours nothing had passed my lips but a nugget or two of brine-sodden, weevily biscuit. And now, cold junk, potted ox-tongue, white Peak and Frean's best ship's bread, raw onions, and cheese, all washed down by copious draughts of Nan's milk mixed with a little rum! I had never drunk such a brew before, but I argued that what was good for the skipper couldn't very well hurt a second mate. And very capital tack, too, I found it. After stowing, tier upon tier, such a feed as one never gets the chance of eating in the same style twice in a lifetime, I cleared away the things; moored afresh on a bight, ready to let go at a moment's notice; and fetching the cleanest cushion I could find out of the cabin, and placing it on a grating close to the tiller, I lay down, first drawing the mainsail over the boom, to form a sort of awning. But for a while, tired as I was, I couldn't sleep. I was young and thoughtless, and, like most seamen, although far from irreligious, still extraordinarily shy of making any show of devotion, openly or otherwise.

As I lay there, however, and there passed through my mind the wonderful series of what one might almost fairly call miracles by which I had been preserved and brought to my present hopeful and comfortable position, when destruction seemed so inevitable and so near, I all at once felt impelled to get up on my knees and thank God heartily, in as suitable words as I could muster, for the mercies I had experienced at His hands since plunging overboard in that dark middle watch. I am sorry to say that, notwithstanding the stock I came of, it was an unwonted exercise. But I felt all the better for it, and lying down again, went off at once into a sound but not altogether dreamless sleep.

CHAPTER III.

BIG GAME IN MID-OCEAN.



HAD slept long indeed, for when I awoke, mightily refreshed, the stars were paling before the approach of a new dawn creeping up the eastern sky. A cool and gentle breeze was blowing from the south, and I put on my coat and vest that I had hung up to dry. After attending to Nan I had a biscuit and a cupful of the warm milk, which ever since, by the way, I have infinitely preferred to cow's. As yet I was rather undecided what

to do, although now with a good boat under my feet. Southward lay the ships. But there, also, lay the bitter weather and the high seas, necessitating such constant vigilance as, with so scant a crew, must end in mishap dire and complete unless very speedily some vessel were sighted. The boat, too, was rather large for one man to manage with comfort in anything like a sea-way; and the lighter the wind and warmer the weather, the better, I judged, would be the chance of eventual escape.

Of my position I was, of course, uncertain; nor, though I overhauled the cabin again more carefully, could I find any instrument that might enable me to take an observation. My one chance, it seemed to me, was to get far enough north so as to cross the track of Australian steamers. I would have given my little finger for a sextant. But the boat evidently had carried a purely native crew, wherever they had come from, and I must think myself lucky to have a compass even. And, in any case, I could hardly keep going night and day; so, actually, as long as I made lots of nothing, it mattered little about a degree of drift one way or the other.

As the sun rose I cast off from my moorings and made sail on the boat, waving my cap to the pen, heaving gently on the swell, a black spot in the red pathway of the orb, never doubting I should see it no more. It had served me well, and I felt like parting from an old friend as we headed away nearly due north with a flowing sheet, the cutter leaning over to it like a dog at a bone, and Nan standing under the foot of the foresail—a fine figure of a goat, now with filled-out sides and glossy hair, chewing her cud and keeping a sharp lookout to windward. Without a doubt I owed my life to her, as but for the sound of her calling to me from the sea I had never seen the pen, swimming away from it as I was, and nearly at my last gasp. Once, when the water began to come in so rapidly, just after the storm, the thought had crossed my mind of how much lighter the pen would float if Nan was out of it. But the notion was no sooner conceived than put aside, with the conviction that no good fortune could ever attend such a miserably ungrateful action, either in this world or the next.

In my rummaging I had come across a couple of short clay pipes, quite new, also a stick or two of ship's tobacco, far more to my mind than the rank cigars. And now, as I sat at the tiller and smoked, whilst the boat ripped through the blue water, I felt pervade me a joyous

sense of hope and exhilaration indescribable, setting me to whistle and sing to the mere thrilling of it. Nor did my imagination play me any tricks concerning those two grim and blasted ones. If I had not, by any reason, been able to get rid of them, it might have been otherwise. But then, yards away, glistening wet with spray, was the boom to which the fiery bolt had fastened them, the good Kauri pine of it buckling to the tug of the sail, and all around the warm steady breeze and the blue sky, and the water and the life in it.

You see, I was young and healthy, with a perfect digestion; and I had company, also plenty of good food and drink. All the same, I shunned the darksome little den of a cabin, close and vile-smelling. Nor was there any need for its shelter, the weather keeping gloriously fine; the wind through the day steady but light, dying away at sundown, and giving place to soft airs, which scarce rippled the water heaving gently to the dark blue overhead studded with great constellations that glowed and burned and palpitated with a nearness and brilliancy I had never seen equalled.

What rather puzzled me was that, search as I might, I could find no clue to ownership about the boat or her belongings. Nowhere aboard of her was so much as a printed letter. On her stern she carried, in place of a name, a gilded device of a rising sun; and the same, in smaller size, was on each bow. She was copper-fastened throughout, and the tiller, of solid brass, was a fine piece of work running in a graceful curve to a dolphin's head. The sails were of light but very strong cotton; her spars of that grand wood, the Kauri pine of New Zealand. From a few indications about her, legible only to the eye of a seafarer, I judged her of French build. And in that at least the sequel proved me right.

A week passed without my sighting anything, the weather fine, but the winds growing perceptibly lighter, when one morning, taking my customary look around before casting off, I spied a gleam of canvas in the north-east. But I could make nothing more of it until noon, by which time I had risen the object sufficiently to see that it was a small painted-port brig under topgallant-sails, topsails, and foresail; and judging from the way her head fell off and came to, with a seeking sort of motion that reminded me of a dog nosing after a lost scent, steering any way. And as I neared her I saw that she was, as sailors say, 'all anyhow.' Only one small

dingey hung at her davits; no smoke poured from her galley funnel; no faces looked over her high bulwarks. A pretty creature of a brig, too, of some 300 tons, with a yacht-like bow, and clean run aft to a square stern; masts painted a buff colour tapering away up to gilded trucks; lofty and squarely rigged—too much so for my fancy—her copper glistening in the sun like a new kettle at each lazy roll, and all about her, to a sailor's mind, a touching air of loneliness and desertion, accentuated rather than relieved by the outstretched arm of a white female figurehead.

'A derelict, for a dollar, Nanny,' said I, luffing up as we got closer. 'Anyhow, I'll hail her;' and I shouted out, 'Brig ahoy!'

Listening, I imagined I heard some sort of reply, sounding muffled and dull.

'Brig ahoy!' I roared again. 'Is there anybody on board?'

And as I sat and stared, all at once, over the rail, for'ard of the main-rigging, came a head and stared back at me—a great round black-and-yellow head with eyes that glowed like balls of fire, and a big, open, red cavern of a mouth, showing white teeth, long, sharp, and cruel, and that answered my hail by such a deep, savage roar as made me jump to my feet and exclaim, 'The devil, Nan! If that's a specimen of her crew, I think we'll clear!' And Nan seemed to be of the same opinion; for, meeting those fierce green eyes, she gave a lamentable bleat and scuttled aft, and crouched between my legs as I hurriedly put the helm up and, very slowly, for the wind had nearly died away, drove astern. As I passed the brig's quarter I observed a rope's-end towing overboard, and having some desire to see more of this strange business, I caught hold, and finding it came handsomely off the deck, veered away until brought up, when I took a turn round the iron traveller of the foresail. Jumping to let go the gaff-halyards, I was startled by a voice overhead, and looking up, I saw a man's face poking out of one of the two little stern windows—a furiously red, choleric face fringed with bristling white whiskers; a stiff gray moustache sprang from under a big hooked nose; and from the shelter of shaggy eyebrows gleamed a pair of deep-set, light-blue eyes.

'Hi, hi, you, sir!' roared the voice. 'Confound it, are you deaf? Why, by gad, he's got my boat! What are you doing with my boat, eh, eh?'

Too much taken aback by this second surprise to answer at once, all I did was to stare at the

astonishing apparition, as it returned the compliment with interest, framed like a picture in the small port which it almost filled. Was the vessel bewitched? Tiger amidships and madman aft; or both together? Or were they one and the same being? I protest that something of this kind went to make up the notions that floated through my brain at the moment, mingled with memories of sea-stories I had heard—strange, weird stories of haunted vessels wandering on unknown seas, manned by evil spirits, able to change their shapes at will.

And I must have shown it in my face, too, for the other one grinned as it shouted: 'Well, when you're done looking frightened, perhaps you'll come aboard and let us out. How much longer are we to be boxed up in this hole, eh, eh?'

'Can't say, I'm sure,' I retorted, finding my voice at last; 'you've got a deck passenger I don't much relish the cut of.'

'Why, confound it, sir! I crippled'—the face was beginning, when suddenly, at the other window, appeared another face—a girl's face, pale but beautiful, lit by great dark-brown eyes; a perfect nose, lips arched like a Cupid's bow over double rows of pearl, and a voice that rang sweet and firm and true as she interrupted the other.

'No,' said she eagerly as I gaped in amazement, looking, I dare say, foolish enough, 'don't come on board—at least not yet. Tippoo is only lame. He'd hurt you—he's become so savage since'—and here I saw her face blanch and a sort of shiver pass over it as she continued, more hurriedly, seeing, I suppose, the utter bewilderment impressed on my features as I stood holding on to the forestay and gaping up at her: 'There's no one here except my father—Major Fortescue—and myself. Our crew left us in that very boat, after shutting us up in here, trying to set fire to the brig, and letting Tippoo—that's the tiger—loose. My father shot some of the men, and afterwards smashed Tippoo's leg. But where,' she suddenly broke off, 'did you come from?' eyeing Nan with a swift look of surprise as the animal came and took up her place alongside me and bleated loudly at the strange faces.

'I was second mate of a ship,' I replied shortly, for I was all athirst to hear more; 'I fell overboard; and after drifting about with Nan here, I found the boat and two dead men in her.'

'The infernal scoundrels!' shouted the other head from its window; 'the murdering thieves!—There, there, Helen, you are so impatient! Can't you let the man tell his story without

constantly interrupting him!—Yes, sir,' he went on, his face turning so purple with rage at the remembrance of his troubles that I thought he'd choke every minute—'yes, sir; nothing but misfortunes since we left Colombo! First the captain died, then the mate. Then I took charge (she's my own ship, sir, cargo and all). Then the brutes of niggers mutinied' (I hardly wondered at it), 'and wanted to leave, saying the ship was doomed. I put two of 'em—the ringleaders—in irons with my own hands. Then, sir, one night they locked us up here and got the boat overboard, but not before I'd shot four or five of 'em. Gad, sir, if they hadn't cleared I'd ha' potted the lot at short range! They tried to set us afire, too. But it rained; and I kept 'em jumping with my big express; so they didn't do much at the fire business. And they let Tippoo loose—as quiet a cub as you ever saw—until, well, he's a man-eater now, and I dare say you'd better kill him before you come on board. No trouble; I broke his leg the other day. I'm glad my boat's proved of service to you, sir; and, eh, eh'—putting a glass to his eye—'gad, yes, your goat also.' All this he paid out as fast as he could reel it off, bringing up with a sudden sort of a gasp, quite plain to hear.

As he finished speaking, with a loud roar, there sprang on to the brig's taffrail a three-parts-grown tiger, lashing his tail in fury and swaying unsteadily on three legs to the motion of the vessel. His near front leg he kept bent upwards, with all that part between the knee and claws hanging loose. His regard was fixed on Nan, who shivered and bleated in terror. Fearing that he was about to spring, I slipped my line, and seeing that presently there would be some manœuvring, I hoisted the mainsail and foresail, put the helm up, and a light air filling the canvas, the cutter began to draw ahead.

'Don't desert us!' exclaimed the girl appealingly.

'No,' I said, 'I will not. But I don't quite see how I'm to get on board whilst that brute's there.'

'Can you shoot?' she asked.

'I'll try,' I said, 'although I haven't had much practice at big game. However, if you'll lower me down a rifle and some cartridges I may hit him.'

At this both heads withdrew, and in a minute or two the Major—to call him as I always did henceforth—had a stout line out of the window with some kind of firearm dangling from it. Giving the boat a sheer, I took her right across the brig's stern, not without some

apprehension of the tiger's making a flying leap ; but, owing to his broken leg, perhaps, he only growled in a menacing, low, throaty note. Clutching the gun and a bag of cartridges attached thereto, I drew out again from the *Hebe*—the brig's name in gilt letters on a blue scroll athwart her stern—and loaded. As luck would have it, I was not only something of a shot, but understood how to handle a rifle, and I heard the old Major grunt in a disappointed sort of a manner as I shoved the cartridges in.

Jibbing, I got the cutter round with her stern to the *Hebe's*, and taking careful aim, fired—and missed. The motion of the boat had been too much for me, and I saw the bullet knock chips off the rail a full foot to port of the brute, who at once disappeared.

'Never mind!' shouted the Major as I told him. 'Follow him up! He's cunning after my hitting him. Make the goat bleat—that'll fetch him!'

That I could do at any time by simply making to Nan; and drawing ahead, I presently got another shot as the tiger, unable to resist the sound of the bleating, came to the rail amidships where I had first seen him. This time I was sure of a hit, for I heard the thud of the heavy bullet and the fierce growl as the brute fell back.

It was getting late in the afternoon, and quite tired of this game of hide-and-seek on the high seas, I determined, in the face of this last successful shot, to try and end it. So, making the long painter fast to the brig's mainchains, I scrambled into them, rifle in hand, and cautiously peered over the rail. There lay the tiger biting savagely at a wound in his shoulder, from which blood oozed in a thick stream. With a good rest for my rifle, I made no mistake this time, but sending the bullet into his head just below the eye, had the satisfaction of seeing him roll over and stretch out dead.

CHAPTER IV.

ON BOARD THE 'HEBE.'



TEPPING on to the brig's deck, I looked around with not a little curiosity—after making quite sure that the tiger was dead. Almost the first thing to catch my eye was a great heap of oakum, old canvas, all well tarred and half consumed, lying on the mainhatch, between a big pair of wooden chocks, evidently formed for the reception of

just such a boat as lay alongside. The fire had burnt through the tarpaulins and charred the hatches, but had been extinguished before doing further damage—a very narrow squeak though. Close to the forward end of the hatch was a little galley; farther along, a good-sized deck-house, painted white; and the after-ends of both these structures were fairly riddled with bullet-holes. And everywhere about the deck lay scattered bones—fragments of human skulls, vertebrae, arms, and thighs, many of them crunched and broken, but all clean picked and dried by the hot sun. Still, the planking thereabouts looked like the floor of a slaughter-house, and the smell was an equal proportion of dissecting-room and menagerie combined.

There was no poop to the brig. The space was taken up by a house running right aft to the wheel, with a narrow alley-way on each side between it and the bulwarks. A handsome brass railing ran round the top of this sort of poop, to which there was no entrance from the quarter-deck. But I noticed a couple of small windows in its front with the glass in them smashed. Houses and fittings were immensely strong, and built with great solidity. Heavy semicircular double doors, fronting the wheel and binnacle, gave access by a few steps to the cabin; and these doors had been secured by a kedge anchor and a couple of spare chain topsailsheets in such fashion that, opening outwards as they did, it would be an utter impossibility for any one within to move them. Indeed, it was fully a quarter of an hour before I was able to open them myself. But at last I flung them wide and pushed back the hood of the companion, and stepped aside, waiting with some curiosity the appearance of the prisoners.

First to emerge was the old gentleman whose features I already knew so well—a tall, rigid figure, dressed in a long frock-coat of some thin, dark material, immaculate linen with large diamond studs and sleeve-links, polished tan shoes, and a solar-topee as big as a beehive—altogether a most amazing spectacle under the circumstances.

Introducing himself as Major Fortescue, late of the 14th Bengal Native Infantry, he shook hands and, stepping to the taffrail, sniffed and snorted, and drew great breaths of air into his lungs, saying: 'Killed the beggar, hey? Well done! By gad, it's a treat to get out again!' Then, catching a whiff from the maindeck: 'Piff, pah! how those brutes smell yonder! Must get them cleared away presently.'

'How long have you been locked up down below?' I asked as we ascended the little ladder to the top of the deck-house, I meanwhile keeping an eye lifting for a sight of the girl, and wondering what was delaying her.

'Eight days,' said the Major, answering my question. 'Eight interminable days! Luckily we had plenty to eat and drink. But the heat was infernal! I've been coffee-planting in Ceylon. Gave it up, after a year or so. Doctors advised a sea-voyage for my daughter, who had been ailing for some time. So I bought the *Hebe* here, and loaded her with coffee for the Cape. Meant to sell ship and cargo there, and go home in the mail-boat. Nice mess it's turned out to be! Nothing, sir, but bad luck! Third week out the captain took ill, lingered another week, and died. That was bad enough! Then the mate fell from aloft and broke his thigh; mortification set in, and *he* died. Light winds, mostly ahead, and calms all the time. Then, sir, the coloured crew—ten of 'em—got rusty—swore the ship was accursed, and what not. But I know the nigger, sir; and I bounced 'em up to their work. You see, there wasn't another white on board now. But the *serang*, or boatswain, as you'd call him, knew how to sail the *Hebe*; and as I was a bit of a navigator, I thought we might pull through. But the brutes jibbed; and I had to knock the *serang* and the *tindal*—his mate—down, and put irons on them for drawing their knives on me. I dragged the pair into the bathroom there'—pointing to a little sentry-box of a shop on the port side of the quarter-deck—'and locked them in. But that night, Helen and myself being both below, the beggars rushed aft, let the two out, and fastened us up in the cabin. Then the brutes started to get the boat overboard, cockbilling the mainyard, as you see, and putting a tackle on it, whilst I was making good practice at them with my heavy express through those front windows. Gad, sir, it reminded me of the old Mutiny days! I drove 'em into the deck-house and out again, into the galley and out again. I had lots of ammunition, and didn't spare it. Four, I know, I accounted for. But then night came, dark as a dog's mouth, and it was only guess-work; and they got the boat over in spite of me. And before they went they lit a roaring fire on the hatch there, and loosed Tippoo, whom I was taking to a friend in Capetown. Helen and I did all we could to get out; but the house was too solid, and you can't cut teak with a table-knife. And all the

time the fire was flaming and blazing in such a fashion that it seemed as if nothing could save us from being roasted—not alive; I would have taken care of that—when down came a perfect deluge of rain and extinguished it. By then the boat must have been out of sight, or, surely, they had returned and finished their work. Helen couldn't bear to think of the tiger eating those bodies whose remains you see there; so, to please her, I tried to shoot him—an ungrateful act, as but for his scavenging they might have bred a pestilence. But after getting hit he went into his cage, and only came out o' nights. He was a quiet, tractable creature enough—we had him from the time he was a cub—but after his first taste of human flesh, of course, blood-thirsty as the rest of his tribe. And the niggers reckoned on this when they let him go, well knowing what an excellent sentry he'd make over us. Well, sir, I think that's all for the present;' and the Major turned and looked at me, a fine, well-set-up, soldierly figure of a man, but one you'd sooner expect to meet in a military club than on the deck of a derelict brig in the Indian Ocean.

I was going to make some remark, but just then I became aware of a graceful figure that had stepped up alongside us, and was holding out her hand to me, and looking at me scrutinisingly with those wonderful deep-brown eyes of hers.

A very gracious presence indeed was Helen Fortescue as she stood there, clad in a close-fitting dress of some soft gray stuff, with narrow white cuffs fastened by silver buttons at the wrists. Under her collar was knotted a blue silk kerchief, and on her head she wore a round straw hat trimmed with ribbon of the same colour. And she looked as dainty and fresh and spick-and-span as her father; indeed, the pair might have gone as they were to the swellest of garden-parties. Neither beauty nor age in distress was there a sign of! And still, they must have had a pretty trying experience.

All this time Nanny had been bleating loudly from the boat, missing me; and as we three walked on to the maindeck, the girl—she was only about twenty—picking her way repugnantly, I jumped over, and placing Nan in the chains, which in the *Hebe* were large and roomy, I easily lifted her thence on board.

'Poor Tippoo, a bad ending for you!' the girl said as we passed the tiger. 'I had him when he was not much bigger than a kitten,' she explained to me. 'And until this awful

voyage'—and she looked around shuddering—'he was quite a pet, fond of me, and very quiet.'

'Perhaps, Mr Vallance' (I had told him my name when he introduced himself), here put in the Major very politely, 'you would not mind helping me to clear up these decks a little whilst Helen gets us something to eat? I am sorry to have seemed inhospitable. But, really, all we had to offer below there was some cold preserved stuffs and bitter beer. Our water gave out yesterday, and we had no means of cooking anything in the cabin. It was a great oversight on my part forgetting to bring a spirit-lamp. By the way, I once knew a Colonel Vallance—old crony of mine—Somersetshire man, I think. Any relative of yours?'

I replied that I thought he most likely was, as I had heard my father talking of a militant branch of the family settled near Taunton. This seemed to please the old boy excessively, and he rather dropped the curt, somewhat high and mighty style he had hitherto affected. But the question almost made me laugh, so ludicrously inapposite did it appear to our surroundings. However, we turned to with a will, triced open a big port there was amidships, dragged Tippoo over and through, and sent his collection of bones after him.

'That,' said the Major as he kicked a skull into the water, 'was Lal Mohammed the cook's, and a better hand at a curry never lived.'

'Where are the other boats, Major?' I asked presently as I bent on a bucket, and the Major stood ready, broom in hand and sleeves rolled up, to scrub whilst I drew water.

'There never were any more,' replied he. 'When I bought the *Hebe* she had lost all her boats in a storm, and none were procurable in Colombo, except the dingey yonder. So, acting on my agent's advice, I purchased the one you picked up from a French builder in Point de Galle. I always kept her well stocked with provisions, ready for an emergency. You found, I think you told me, plenty left?'

I said I had, and as we worked described the state of the boat more particularly than I had hitherto done.

'Aha!' said he, chuckling. 'Like Tippoo, the lot made a bad end. There must have been five or six in her; one or two, probably, wounded in the dark, for I kept at 'em. There was a nice breeze springing up as they left, I remember, because of its fanning the fire. By-and-by they became hungry and thirsty, and

they tackled the rum. Then the Nagapatam and the Tanjore men got drunk; knives were drawn, and they went for each other. Presently the *serang* and the *tindal* found themselves the only survivors of the fight. Those were the two fellows you found on the boom—the ring-leaders, the ones I put in irons. I can see the whole affair as plainly as possible. And I am pleased, sir, for they were an uncommon bad crowd. Fancy a nigger drawing his knife on me!'

'I think I'll pass the boat astern,' I said. 'Perhaps we may get her up later on. But I doubt it. She's too heavy.'

'Very well,' he replied; 'I don't want to lose her. Still, if we can't manage to lift her, she must go. Can't tow a boat like that if heavy weather comes.'

'No,' I thought to myself as I took the painter aft; 'there'll be other matters we shall lose if it comes on to blow!' and I glanced at the spread of canvas aloft, flattening itself into the masts and then suddenly banging out again. The painter was too short to give her drift enough, I found; so, for the present, I hauled in and bent on to it the rope's-end I had hung on to before I boarded the brig, which happened to be the sheet of the main-trysail boom.

When I came for'ard again matters looked more ship-shape. The decks, though far from clean, were at least clear; there was also a cheering sound of dishes rattling in the galley. And as I peeped in with an offer of help, I saw Miss Fortescue, busy in front of the stove, with a big white apron on.

'No, thank you,' said she, smiling, when I volunteered. 'I'm a soldier's daughter; and I'm glad to say that he brought me up to be useful as well as ornamental.'

'That's so, Vallance,' said the old chap, at work alongside with a basin of soap and water. 'Helen's not quite a ti-tum-tiddledy girl, as I call 'em—only able to strum on the piano, talk nonsense, and be more or less saucy to their elders.—And' (to his daughter), 'my dear, I think, as you and I at least have had enough of the cabin, and the night's fine, we'll take tea on the deck-house.'

'Very well, then,' I put in; 'and while it's preparing, don't you think, Major, I might as well clew up and furl those topgallant-sails? It won't take me long, and we can't be too snug.'

'Certainly, if you think it necessary,' replied he. 'Sorry I can't go aloft; but at all events I can pull and haul as well as any two Lascars.'

So pretty soon I was perched aloft on the fore topgallant-yard, and quickly had the sail snugged. Then down I came and clewed up the main, helped by the Major, who well justified his boast, for he was a muscular, hearty old man. When I reached the deck again it was still light, and I found that the others had set out quite an appetising repast on the roof of the after-house. Camp-stools and a table appeared from somewhere; and as I took my place I felt rather ashamed of my sun and salt stained attire, compared with these well-dressed people and the appurtenances of civilisation surrounding them; unable either, at times, to realise that the brig had lately been the scene of a terrible tragedy, and that the calm, scrupulously-dressed old gentleman sitting opposite me had been one of the chief actors in it, shooting down his fellow-creatures like rabbits. A tight hand the Major, without a doubt; and perhaps, I thought to myself, it wasn't such a wonder, considering, that his 'niggers' should have preferred his room to his company and his 'bossing'! All the same, I couldn't forgive them for trying to roast his daughter, whose soft eyes, as I now told my story in a more connected form, rested on me, I thought, with looks of sympathy and interest.

'By gad, sir,' commented the Major as I finished, 'as narrow an escape as I ever heard of in my life! And the goat—why, she saved you!'

'How glad I am, after all, that they did take the boat!' said the girl gently; and the tone in which she spoke made my heart jump. Then the talk drifted.

'Yes,' said the Major, 'I gave £700 for the *Hebe*, and the cargo's worth another £1200. But I would gladly take her price now for the lot, and cry quits. I'm afraid, as a speculation, it's going to turn out unsatisfactory. We're nearly seven weeks out to-day. Where we are I don't know. My last observation made us longitude 77° 39', latitude 15° 20'. But Heaven only knows where we've wandered to since then! We'll see to-morrow, anyhow. Helen, my love, this curry is not up to Lal Mohammed's. He was an artist; and I'm half sorry now I potted him.'

I stared; but I soon realised that the Major was quite in earnest. Glancing at the girl, I saw her smile faintly as I caught her eye; and I blushed, feeling that she read my thoughts in my face. Honestly, I was inclined to be vexed at the self-absorbed particularity about

trifles shown by a man who had just narrowly escaped from a very unpleasant adventure, to put it mildly, and who was probably on the eve of others. Also, with my sodden clothes and bare feet, I was ill at ease in such fine company. You will remember that I was young, and that I had seen little of the world beyond my ships and my father's vicarage. Thus the Major's pernicketiness (I can find no better word) half amazed, half disgusted me; and I think, I repeat, that his daughter saw it, and also intuitively guessed how I felt respecting that matter of outward seeming; for she said presently: 'Mr Vallance, I have taken the liberty of making poor Captain Davis's berth ready for you. I'm almost sure his clothes will fit you. I found some, nearly new, and put them out. You have had a much harder time than we two, so will please go and try the things on, and then take a rest.'

This was thoughtful indeed, and I said as much, adding that, as for rest, I was in no need of it; and that, not knowing the moment the long spell of fine weather might break, I meant to sleep on deck. Even now there was a light air sneaking about that it might pay to trim the yards to.

But my ideas jumped well to that notion of a clean rig-out, and I made my way down (for the cabin was really below the level of the deck) into a very handsome little sea-parlour, lit by a swinging lamp; for it was, by this, dark under hatches, although a nearly full moon had risen, and on deck it was almost as bright as day. I found the berth and the clothes—a good suit of light tweeds; and not only these, but a full equipment of underclothing and a pair of canvas shoes. And everything fitted fairly well. There were razors too, and being able, as most sailors are, to shave by touch alone, I soon had a week's stubble off my chin. There was a glass, but the berth-lamp was too dim. However, I made a fair job of it, and what with that and the clean shift, felt a new man all over.

When I went on deck again the pair were still sitting in the moonlight. Miss Fortescue, as I stood before them, just stared as at a stranger, then smiled; and the Major, putting up his glass, remarked: 'Well, by gad, here's a sea-change, eh, eh? Why, now, that's something like, eh, Helen?'

Then for an hour longer, all the wind having died away, we sat discussing our chances of finding help to work the brig; and the Major dozing off after his last glass of wine, we two

others talked together like very old friends—she telling me about the dismally dreary time they had of it below after the mutineers left the brig, together with something of their former life, from which I gathered that the Major must be fairly well to do. She herself had left England to join him at her mother's death, being then a mere child. Three years ago her father had retired on half-pay; but, in place of settling down comfortably, he had chosen to roam all over the East, carrying his daughter with him; speculating a little, trading a little, and, until this last venture, apparently making money.

And presently she drew me on to talk about the dear old people at home, and the quiet parsonage, and the village buried amongst apple-orchards, and deep lanes of hazel and hawthorn, far from the sound of the sea. And she listened, it seemed to me, with something of eager longing in her eyes, as of one who asked nothing better than such restful life in such a land. Everywhere was almost absolute stillness. Not a sail stirred. The water was like glass, without a ripple. Over the royal mast-head swam the moon, making of the brig a silver model swimming in a silver sea. Opposite to us the Major breathed heavily; between us Nan chewed her cud, stopping at times to nose the delicate white hand that played amongst her hair.

For long the silence reigned unbroken, the girl gazing out to sea with fixed, unconscious eyes; myself watching the perfect features thrown into full relief, as her hat, tilted back and allowing a few stray curls to wander down the broad, white forehead, brought the sweet face out of its shadow. Our mutual reverie was interrupted prosaically by the Major choking with a horrible sound that made us start. And then we found out how late it was; and the Major called for hot water, and insisted on brewing a night-cap. So Helen and I went to the galley together and revived the dying fire, and filled the kettle and brought it aft. Then I bundled a mattress and some rugs up from the skipper's berth; whilst the others, with many good-nights, went below to their own—the Major sleepily asking to be called if a change came. 'Helen can steer, mind you,' said he; 'and so can I. We'll keep watch and watch when the wind comes, Vallance.'

And I replied formally and obediently, 'Ay, ay, sir!' smiling to myself at such a soldier-like formula, and thinking that it would be very long before I got tired of at least one of my

watch-mates. Ay, verily, this last trip of mine was making up abundantly for all the eight years' dullness of seafaring I had been wont to wonder and grumble at!

Alongside the little bathroom was a snug corner, sheltered from the dew by the overhanging edge of the deck-house. There I spread my mattress, and stretching out, lit one of the Major's cigars and thought of many things, but mostly of the fairest girl I had ever seen—his daughter Helen.

Then, dozing, I heard the clip, clip, of Nan's hoofs along the deck as she searched for me, and presently snugged down like a dog at my feet. I had many dreams that night; but all were pleasant, and athwart them all moved a woman's face—the face I had watched so long in the moonlight. Yes, I was indeed far gone in my first love!

CHAPTER V.

WE LOSE THE MAJOR.



AWOKE at daylight, after a very sound and pleasant night's sleep. No one else was stirring, and I had a good wash, lit the galley fire and a pipe, milked Nan, and went on the fore-castle-head. The weather was still the same, and the brig had not steerage-way on her. Running out to the jib-boom-end, I got a good view of the vessel, and thought that the Major had bought her a bargain—for a prettier model of a little ship I never clapped eyes on. Coming inboard, I looked into the fore-castle—the large house on deck. But there was nothing to be seen save the usual array of bunks, a few bags, one chest, and any number of native mats, pipes, &c. The after bulkhead was full of bullet-holes, evidently made by heavy metal (four ounce, as I found later on), for many of the balls had gone clean through the galley first and then into the fore-castle. No wonder the poor devils left hurriedly, I thought, under such a bombardment. And except Tippoo's great cage—larger than Nan's even—there was absolutely no shelter about the decks for a crowd of men.

That mainyard all askew offended my eye, and setting to work, I presently squared it by the lifts and braces, and running aloft, sent the tackle down, knowing it was quite useless for three of us to attempt to heave-in a two-ton boat, even with the help of the winch. By the

time I had arranged these little matters the sun rose red and very angry-looking, with the whole eastern sky aflame—promise of a regular scorcher of a day. There was a small furling awning aft, and I cast it adrift and was spreading it, when Helen Fortescue came on deck.

'Oh,' she said, glancing forward and aloft as she shook hands, 'how busy you have been, Mr Vallance! I feel quite a sluggard. My father is not awake yet. The excitement of yesterday has tired him, I think. Now I will go into the galley and see about breakfast.'

I noticed that she had a pair of rough gloves and her apron ready to put on; and it struck me forcibly as she walked forward, with her fine lithe figure adapting itself unconsciously to the light roll of the brig, that there, indeed, was a girl with no thought of shirking work about her, good blood showing in every feature and trait—ready, with the man she loved, to meet any hap the world might hold for them.

Presently up came the Major, looking brisk and lively, and cocking a sort of soldier-sailor eye knowingly aloft and around.

'Hot day, sir,' he said; 'hot as blazes;' and without further ado he hopped on to the rail and began tying the awning-points. Then we stood aft looking at the boat.

'Yes,' said the Major, 'she must go, as you say. It would take all the hands that are away to hoist her in. Oh, well, some poor devil, even as you did, may drift across her. But we'll let her hang on for a while anyhow. Help may come.'

'Shall I take anything out of her?' I asked.

'Not a thing,' replied the Major. 'You know what somebody—I forget who—said about casting bread upon the waters. By gad, sir, when you came across our stern yesterday I was flabbergasted to see my boat again, with such a big loaf in it. I wonder whether the thing could possibly happen twice?' and the old chap laughed, not being able to see into the future. And in view of his Christian-like behaviour in the matter of her stores, I refrained from pointing out that his parallel wouldn't stand good, for in the former instance boat and bread had been set adrift without any consent of his.

It was very awkward having no door in front of the deck-house, as everything had to be brought aft by the narrow alley-way between it and the bulwarks. So, while the fine weather lasted, we decided to take our meals under the awning. Thus we breakfasted, with much talk of our position, not at all uncheerful. I was

pleased to find that there were two sextants on board; also that the Major, with some foresight, had kept the chronometer going. After the meal I suggested that we should clew up the foresail, and the Major assenting, we had a half-hour's heavy pulling, after which I went aloft and in some sort managed to stow it—a regular hard-weather stow—frapping a lump of canvas to the yard wherever I could get a hold. It was a big sail, and took me a long time to handle, even in such a fashion. But I managed it at last. And when I came down, although pretty well knocked up, it was in much better humour with the brig under a couple of topsails and fore-topmast staysail; and for after canvas I could set the mizzen, close reefed.

Miss Fortescue was at work in the cabin, and the Major sat at the galley door peeling sweet potatoes, making things look a bit homelike, although the white shirt, solar-topee, yellow boots, and diamonds put a touch of incongruity into the scene that made me nearly laugh outright.

'I'm an old campaigner, Mr Vallance,' said he as I approached, 'and I've seen some ups and downs in the world. But I can assure you, sir, that I don't think I ever felt so glad as I did when you appeared under the *Hebe's* stern and came to the rescue. Let me tell you, sir, that it was a plucky thing in you to board the brig, as you did, with a wounded man-eater at large on her decks; and if I haven't, Mr Vallance,' he went on, much to my discomposure, 'thanked you as I ought to have done, I sincerely apologise, and in my own and my daughter's name do so now;' and rising, he made me a most genteel bow, whilst all the potato-parings went out of his apron, greatly to Nan's delight. Returning the Major's salutation to the best of my ability, we shook hands, and I felt that last night I had done the old man an injustice in thinking him either selfish or unfeeling.

At six bells (11 A.M.) a gentle breeze sprang up and sent us through the water at a three-knot rate; and presently the Major, sending Helen to the wheel to relieve me, brought up the sextants and, with no little show of pride, began to screw the sun down.

'You take the other one, Mr Vallance,' said he, 'and check me. I'm not a professional, you know,' he went on, squinting through the glasses, 'but I don't think I'll be far out.'

But it was all I could do to take my eyes off that most graceful figure of a helmswoman,

swaying her lissome shape to the working of the spokes as if to the manner born, glancing at me now and again, with a sort of shy smile that seemed to my sanguine heart already to hold affection in it as well as friendship.

'Eight bells! Eight bells!' simultaneously from each of us; and away we went below to work out our reckoning. As luck would have it, and to the Major's extreme delight, there was only about a mile difference between us. Our longitude was $66^{\circ} 5'$ east, latitude $29^{\circ} 10'$ south, by which it will be seen that the brig's progress since the Major's last observation had been mostly all westing, which was so much the better for us. Getting out a chart, I found our position on it, making us on a west-by-south course, 1500 miles from Cape Agulhas, and only 120 miles east of the island of Rodriguez. But there was nothing to call there for. And these at least, if my memory serves me aright, were the results of my first sights taken on board the *Hebe*.

The wind was westerly, with a little northing in it; and bracing the yards in, we found that the brig would easily lie her course with a few points to spare, and that, even under such short canvas, when we managed to get a cast of the log—Helen at the wheel, holding the glass—she was sailing no less than six knots. This was truly wonderful; and I realised that I was on a clipper, and the fastest one I had ever been shipmates with.

'She steers beautifully,' said Helen when I offered to relieve her, 'and I like being here. Of course the boat bothers her a little; and I suppose, if it comes on to blow, it must go.'

'I'm afraid it must go in any case,' I replied. 'But there's no particular hurry; and any minute something may heave in sight.'

Opening a little signal-locker, I took out from amongst the flags a small British merchant ensign, and asked the Major if I might hoist it as a distress signal (I had done nothing whatever hitherto on the *Hebe* without first consulting him).

'Do exactly what you think proper, Mr Vallance,' he replied, setting down a great round of boiled beef that he had brought from the galley. 'You're our practical man, although, as you see, you're not going to have the navigation part of the business all to yourself;' and he chuckled, and stood watching as I bent the flag on, union down, and hoisted it half-way up the signal-halyards, rove at the end of the mizzen-gaff.

'There,' said I, 'if any ship sights that, she'll know we want something, even if our canvas isn't enough to tell her.'

'My father thinks navigation is his strong point,' remarked Helen, with a smile, as the Major tramped back to the galley. 'This is not his first trip to sea, you must know. Once he owned a share in a Calcutta steamer, and made a voyage in her. He took up the science then; and when poor Captain Davis and Mr Skinner, the mate, were alive, he always used to help them with their observations.'

'You must have had a very anxious time with so much sickness on board,' I said.

'It was indeed a terribly anxious time,' replied Helen. 'The captain died quietly one night, without any one knowing it at the moment. But Mr Skinner was delirious for some days, and kept constantly calling for me, never seeming easy unless I was with him.'

'Was he a young man?' I asked, with a sort of empty feeling somewhere inside me.

'No, poor dear, he was not,' answered she, smiling. 'Old enough to be my grandfather, and quite gray. But,' she added, perhaps on seeing how my face lightened, 'I was very fond of him, and of the captain too—who leaves a wife and child at Point de Galle.'

After dinner, finding that the brig steered a bit wild without any canvas aft, I set the mizzen—a mere rag with its close reef, but quite enough. Then, whilst the Major took the wheel, I slung a pair of binoculars across my shoulders and went on to the main-royal yard in order to get a good look round.

I have said, I think, that the *Hebe* was lofty—over-sparred, indeed, in my opinion—and from the elevation I had attained she seemed a mere toy of a vessel underneath me. To set the mizzen I had been obliged to remove the awning, and thus had a clear view of her decks, looking solitary enough; for Helen had gone below, and the only person visible was the old Major, making a very different picture to his daughter, as he stood bolt upright like a sentry on duty, one eye on the compass, the other on the weather-leach of the main-topsail. As, presently, I swept the sea-line, some low, black object jumped into the field of the glass. For a time I worked away at it, but without avail. It might be a capsized boat, or a buoy, or a lump of wreckage—more likely the last—for anything I could make of it. It was broad on the weather bow; and hailing the deck, I motioned the Major to keep the brig off a few points.

until she pointed straight for the thing. Then, making sure there was nothing else in sight, I descended and told the Major, who became quite excited and called his daughter. But we had not risen it from the deck yet. Indeed, from the smallness of the object, I did not expect we should until close upon it. Helen and I went on to the fore-castle-head, there to get a better view; and all at once she cried: 'I see it; it's a bit of a ship!' But, using the glass, the thing looked strangely familiar to me.

'By heavens!' I exclaimed suddenly, 'if that's not mine and Nan's old pen, call me a Dutchman! I ought to know it!'

And so it proved to be; and as it came washing and bobbing heavily by, we went aft again and had a good view. It was just as I left it, floating face upwards; and it took very little imagination on my part to stretch me on it drenched and gasping, and to feel once more the comfort of touch that Nan's warm flesh gave to my chilled body.

'By gad!' exclaimed the Major after a long stare through his glass, luffing to his course, 'fancy a man on that thing, wallowing about in mid-ocean with a goat for his crew, and a lump of sodden biscuit in the lazarette! Why, Vallance, you must have thought our boat the outcome of a miracle! What did you do?'

'Well, Major,' I answered after some hesitation, 'I went down on my knees and thanked God for sending her to me, as well as I could manage it.'

'The very best thing, too, you could have done,' replied the Major heartily, and rather to my relief. 'It's only on some such occasion that we sailors and soldiers ever think of Him.'

Towards evening the breeze freshened a bit, and we held a council. My opinion was that through the night we should heave-to, as the mere keeping any sort of watch was, with our numbers, out of the question. It would, I argued, only entail an amount of fatigue, rendering us useless and knocked up in case we should be called upon suddenly to make some supreme effort.

But the Major was opposed to this view completely. 'We are three,' said he. 'Four hours each. Constant lookout, night and day. Helen can do her share as well as any of us. We must keep going.'

I was about to expostulate, when a glance from Helen decided me to remain silent. Besides, was not the Major owner and skipper too? And, anyhow, what business had a poor devil of a

second mate, whose clothes even didn't belong to him, to interfere in the matter? But it angered me to think of a girl like Helen Fortescue having to stand at the wheel until she was ready to drop. However, I thought it wise to lie low and let the Major see how the thing would work, especially as he said he would take the first watch from eight o'clock until twelve; and I had an idea, from the look of the sky, that ere then there might be a change. And presently, after getting a spare line and bending it on to the boat's painter in place of the boom-sheet, so as to give her a fair drift, I relieved the Major to go and get his tea below. It was already nearly eight bells, and he was soon on deck again. 'I shall let her go, Vallance,' said he, pointing to the boat, 'if the wind freshens any more. We can't have her tailing on to us. It will mean another half-knot. Besides, it'll make a difference in the steering.'

In the cabin I found Helen waiting tea for me. For the size of the brig, it was really a large apartment, running her full width but for two state-rooms aft, two forward for the officers, and a box of a pantry. Handsomely panelled and carpeted, well lit, with plenty of glass and silver-ware on a broad sideboard, it looked especially snug and cosy; fairly cool, too, with the bull's-eye windows along the upper part of the house all open. But the principal attraction to me, although noting these details with a careless glance, was the girl, her hair gathered into a mass of dark, shining coils around the small and shapely head—the first time I had had a good view of it without a hat on—who smiled a welcome to me across the well-spread tea-table.

'My father,' said she after we had talked a while, 'thinks it possible, apparently, that we three can carry the *Hebe* to Capetown; and although I did not like to tell him so, I hardly think it likely. Do you?'

'Not unless we get a fair wind, and one of about the strength of this, all the way there,' I replied, laughing; 'and even then, keeping regular watch and watch night and day, only our skeletons would be left by the time we sighted Agulhas. It sounds feasible enough theoretically, but practically, even with the small canvas we carry now, there would be constant callings for all hands. The brig is heavily sparred, and even to trim the yards in any sort of a breeze would take the three of us all we could do. In fact, watch and watch, as we are now, means night and day work for all of us.'

'I thought as much,' said she, 'and saw you were going to protest. But when my father has set his mind on a thing, it is better to let him try it. When he sees that it will not act, then he will be the first to acknowledge it.'

'I have the next watch—the middle one,' I said presently. 'That leaves me to call you. How shall I manage?'

'If you will stamp on the deck,' she replied; 'my berth is there, you see, exactly under the wheel. I am a sound sleeper, but I think I shall be able to hear you. If I do not—well, you can't leave the brig to steer herself, or you might run down and knock at the door. It really does seem rather absurd! All of us ought to sleep on deck within easy call. But father does not care about the open air at nights; nor, to tell the truth, do I. What a crew!' and she laughed merrily.

'Yes, even were we three tough and seasoned sailors,' I said, 'it would be as much or more than we could manage to work the *Hebe* to Capetown. But now!'

'I loved the sea,' said Helen, 'and I love it still. But I do not think, if we get safely to any port, that, after this experience, I should care about trusting myself to its tender mercies again. It has not used me too well. And, as you know, the voyage was planned especially for my benefit. Doubtless my health is as good as ever now; but at what a terrible cost!' and she shuddered as at evil memories, and I saw tears rise to her eyes.

'It was all the fault of those rascally Lascars,' I remarked after a pause. 'You would have done well enough with white seamen. Think of the brutes leaving you to roast alive!'

'Yes, it was cruel,' she answered. 'Still, Mr Vallance, my father, though generally the soul of gentleness with his own colour, like many old Indians has no patience with the native; and when the captain and the mate died'—

'Yes,' I said quickly, for I had thoroughly imagined, long ere this, the sight of the Major bossing his 'niggers.' 'But why, I wonder, did they not put yourself and the Major into the boat, and themselves stick to the brig?'

'Doubtless they would have done so,' said Helen; 'but, as I heard them say over and over again, they imagined that a curse lay upon the *Hebe*, that a fearful plague was stowed away amongst the coffee, and that we were doomed to wander about the sea until all died.'

'A prophecy pretty well fulfilled in their case,

anyhow,' said I. 'And now I think I will go on deck and turn in, or my watch will be out.'

For a few minutes I stood talking to the Major at the wheel. The wind was steady, the brig lying her course and going through the water in good style, although, as I judged, bothered by the swing of the boat behind her. Getting the side-lights out, I retrimmed them and put fresh oil in; then, going on to the fore-castle, I lit my pipe, and after a long look round, carried my mattress from the quarter-deck and sat down and smoked, Nan, as usual, lying at my feet. The night seemed fine enough for anything, and the barometer, as I had glanced at it before leaving the cabin, was, if moving at all, on the rise. Still, instinct at times, if rarely, is more to be depended upon than any mere instrument, and I felt somehow that a change was pending—of what nature I could not be sure. However, pretty certain that not much harm could come to us aloft, although a reef in each topsail would have added to my sense of security, I lay down.

Finding presently that there was rather too much wind for comfort rushing out of the fore-topmast staysail, I shifted my quarters on to the main-deck, and took shelter under the lee of the fore-castle. Here I spread my mattress afresh, and pulling a rug over my head to keep off the moonbeams, I dozed off to sleep, my last waking thoughts being that the wind had taken a shriller note up there in the rigging, causing the *Hebe*, hitherto as upright as a factory chimney, to have a slight list, so that before midnight it was just possible I might find myself in the lee-scuppers. But I was too nearly asleep to go to the trouble of another shift. And I dreamt—naturally enough perhaps—that I was once again on the pen with Nan, only this time the water kept pouring in in such volume that I could plainly hear it above all the raging of the storm; and as I lay listening to the noise of it, and of Nan's wailings as she vainly strove to free herself, I awoke suddenly, bewildered, to find myself and the decks a-wash, Nan bleating on the spare spars to leeward; the brig flat a-back and nearly on her beam-ends, and a full gale of wind roaring and yelling aloft.

Staggering to windward, I ran aft. There was no one at the wheel. Putting it hard up and slipping the becket over a spoke to keep it there, I raced forward, and flattening in the staysail sheet, had presently the satisfaction to feel the *Hebe* paying off and the sails filling

again. Back to the wheel, and in a few minutes I had her again on her course. Lucky it was that we had no more canvas set, or it would have been 'Good-bye, *Hebe*!'

But where was the Major? Not forward, I was nearly certain; and surely he would not have gone below without first calling me! I had left a clear sky, when I fell asleep, beginning to fill with moonlight. Now it was covered with dark clouds, and there was, too, quite a tumble of a sea on. And where was the Major?

All at once, glancing astern, I, notwithstanding the gloom, saw that the boat was gone, and I started as if I had received a galvanic shock with the premonition of evil that suddenly struck me. Then I stamped violently on the deck. But my shoes were too light; so, catching up the grating, I rammed away with it until a tall figure rose through the companion. At first I thought it was the Major's. But a voice, singularly unlike his, with the suspicion of a laugh in it, said: 'It is only two o'clock yet, Mr Vallance!' And then I saw that it was his daughter.

'Will you please see if the Major is in his berth?' I said. 'I have only just come to the wheel. Waking, I found the ship a-back and the boat gone.'

Without a word, she sped below again.

'No,' she said, reappearing presently, and speaking with a sort of despairing quiver in her voice, 'he is not in the cabin. Can he be forward, do you think, Mr Vallance?'

'If you will take the wheel, I'll search the vessel,' I replied. And as she came to me and grasped the spokes I could hear her bravely attempting to choke back a sob. Longing to take her in my arms and comfort her—for, instinctively, I felt that the worst had happened—but without trusting myself to speak, I raced to the galley. Empty! So was the fore-castle! So was every corner about the decks! The Major and the *Hebe* had parted company. Certain of this, I let go the main-topsail-halyards and hauled on the clew-lines until I got the yard as far down as I could. Then backing the fore-topsail yard, I practically had the brig hove-to. Next taking out the port side-light, I carried it aft, and bending it on to the signal-halyards, ran it up to the gaff-end. Then going below, in a minute I returned with the big express rifle and all the cartridges I could find, and loading, began to fire rapidly. All this I did with such desperate energy as left me breathless. Nor all the time did the

dim figure at the wheel move or speak. But now, as I stood beside her, she exclaimed in an indescribable accent of misery and distress: 'Oh, my father! my dear father!'

'Let us hope for the best, Miss Fortescue,' I said. 'I believe myself he is in the boat, and that if it was light he would still be in sight. Evidently finding that it interfered with his steering, he was leaning over—having hauled up the boat—and had just cast adrift the end of the painter when he overbalanced and fell. Look; ' and I pulled in the rope that I had myself bent on the night before—a piece of stout, new line, its end still retaining the half-shape of the carrick-bend I had used to fasten it. So I tried to cheer and comfort her, although, God knows, my own hopes were of the slightest. The Major may have hit the boat in falling (and this was my chief fear), or she might have slipped away too rapidly for him to swim to her. And he was far from a young man; also, as I supposed, short-sighted. But as I took her away from the wheel and secured it amidships, and made her sit down on the raised grating, I did my best to appear hopeful—nay, certain of seeing the boat with the Major in her again at daylight; pointing out, too, that the squall—for it was nothing else, although a precious heavy one—was now over, and that we could not be very far from the spot, with the *Hebe* making no progress.

And talking thus, firing at intervals out of the big rifle—the same that had done such dire execution amongst the crew—I gradually drew her to think more hopefully; although, as I sat close beside her, I could feel a shudder pass through her frame every now and again, and the sight of the set, pale face, staring always astern, made my very heart sore.

Thinking, from her frequent shivering, that she might feel cold, although the night was a warm enough one, I ran down and got a wrap and placed it over her shoulders where she sat; and, as she thanked me, I could hear that she had been crying quietly to herself. And presently she rose and asked me if she couldn't be of some use; and I, knowing that occupation of any kind would be good for her, asked her to get more cartridges, if she could find them, also to trim the red light, which I now hauled down, as it was burning dimly. Then, dark though it was, for the moon was hidden behind a heavy cloud-bank, I slung on the binoculars and went aloft, more for the sake of doing something than because I thought it of any avail. What

I wanted to know was, how soon after I left him did the Major go overboard? It was a question no one could answer. But I was afraid not very long; and in that case it must have happened some hours—hours during which the brig, before the shifting squall struck her, was probably coming to and falling off, but still making headway.

And stare as I might, all that the glass gave me was a heaving field of black water. After that fierce and sudden burst the wind had fallen quite light, although I fancied there was more to follow before very long.

By the time I reached the deck Helen had fixed up the lamp and got it ready to hoist. She also handed me a few cartridges, saying that these were the last. But beyond one swift glance at my face in the red glow of the lamp as we stood facing each other, she asked no questions. Truly it was a brave heart! I only hoped it would not break with the long, miserable waiting for a dawn that seemed as if it never meant to come again.

But it came at last, as most things must, and once the first faint streaks showed, it seemed only a minute until the whole eastern sky was alight with colour. Swinging into the rigging, I was soon perched in the main-royal yard, sweeping the horizon with my glasses.

All around, except where that gloomy cloud-bank still kept its position to the north, the ocean was clear—too clear, alas! Free from the least speck. But I waited for the sun to fully show himself before descending. And even then, when there was no excuse for remaining longer, I hung aloft, dreading to go down and face those eyes, following my every motion so hungrily from the deck.

I need not have been frightened. Helen Fortescue was of the wrong material to make a scene, young as she was. But when I saw what that night's waiting had done for her, I protest I felt ready to set her an example, and cry out and shed tears myself. And I think she must have seen something of the sort in my face, for as she came forward she put her hand in mine and said: 'No hope? No; I feared there could not be!' And when I, being unable to speak with the sight of the great sorrow in that haggard, woe-begone face, could only point to the dark and threatening cloud-bank, as much as to say, 'He might be there,' she but shook her head sadly, saying: 'I fear not. Heaven help me, I have lost my father, the only friend I had in the world!'

But at that I found my tongue, albeit just then an unsteady member, and said: 'Not the only one, as long as I am alive, Miss Fortescue;' and, moved by strong emotion, I carried the hand I still held to my lips. I saw a faint tinge of colour come into her face as she slowly withdrew it from my grasp. But she simply said: 'Thank you, Mr Vallance. I am sure of it.' And seeing that she looked at the companion with a sort of longing in her eyes, I gently supported her trembling footsteps to it, and closed the doors behind her as she went down the little stairway, thinking that she would wish, as much as possible, to be alone with her sorrow. And, I can tell you, my own heart was heavy enough that morning as I went forward to light the fire and feed Nan. I had begun to like the Major, spite of his crotchety ways, and I missed his rather imposing presence about the deck. Nor had I much hope of his safety. Yet often his speech about the boat, and his refusing to let any of the things be taken out of her, recurred to me with a kind of insistent idea that, although unconsciously, he must have had some kind of prevision of what was to happen, and that *ergo* he should be in her at that moment.

'Bad and unsatisfactory logic, Nan,' I said, going back to my old habit. 'God help him! I'm afraid we shall never see the poor Major any more.'

CHAPTER VI.

MY SWEET SHIPMATE.



HELEN did not stay below very long; and when she reappeared, although still haggard and tear-worn, she looked more composed and resigned. But although she spoke little, she insisted on getting the breakfast ready and busying herself about galley and pantry as usual.

Seeing this, and that it would not take much to start the tears going again, I once more went aloft with the glass to get a lookout; and presently, away on the port bow, I saw the white glimpse of canvas—just enough to swear to, but no more. Whilst I was on the royal yard a faint breeze came along, and, descending, I clapped a jigger on the fore-topsail-halyards and started to mast-head the heavy yard. Helen, hearing me, came out to help, putting all her weight into the pull when I gave the

word. But, as I might have known, it was too much for us. So, procuring a notched-block, I led the jigger-fall to the winch, and, with Helen holding on, I managed to, in some sort, get the yard nearly up. We served the main one the same way; and presently Helen brought my breakfast to the wheel, eating, I noticed, nothing herself.

During the morning the vessel I had caught sight of turned out to be a small barque, coming directly for us. And, indeed, the spectacle of the *Hebe* in such weather, under her too badly set bulging topsails, to say nothing of the reversed ensign blowing out from the halyards, and general all-round look of forlornness, would have been enough to attract a ship's attention and make her alter her course in any seas.

As the two vessels neared each other, the stranger backed his mainyards and lay-to within a couple of hundred yards of us—a pretty enough picture of a modern iron clipper, wedge-shaped, wire-rigged, and steel-sparred, as she rolled lightly, showing her bright-red composition-painted bottom glistening wet to the meeting of the black top-sides, whilst her snow-white canvas billowed tremblingly from lofty royal, double topgallant, and double-topsail yards down to her great courses, as if in protest of delay. She swam light, with her Plimsoll mark well out of the water, and looked to be in ballast, or very nearly so. Two persons stood on the poop; and one of them, a red-whiskered, red-faced, stout man, after a long stare at the *Hebe* and her fair helmswoman—for I had been busy about our yards—hailed.

'What brig's that,' he shouted, 'an' what's the matter wi' ye?'

In as few words as possible I told him, asked if he had seen anything of a boat adrift, and wound up—almost hopeless as I knew it must be—by asking him if he could spare us a couple of hands.

I cared nothing about his name or whither he was going; but he replied: 'This is the *Aurora* o' Glasco; five-an'-forty days out; bound to Calcutta. Nae, I hae na seen your boat! An', mon, I can tell ye that there's nae mair cats aboard here nor there's mice to catch. I've only aucht for'ard, a' told. Ye can count 'em for yoursel'.'

And, truly, there were exactly eight bearded faces gaping at us, all in a row, over her rail.

'That's a gey queer story o' yours, mon,' he continued; 'an' if ye've nae objections, I'll just come aboard o' ye, an' hear it mair to

richts.' And I saw him cast another wondering glance at the *Hebe* as he spoke.

'You're welcome,' I replied shortly; and in a minute or two a gig with a couple of men and the speaker in her was pulled alongside the *Hebe*.

Coming up the light ladder I had thrown over, he gave a quick, rather suspicious glance around the decks, but made his best shore-bow as I introduced him to Helen. Presently the three of us went into the cabin, where, producing decanters and glasses, I told my story more fully, interrupted often by exclamations of astonishment in very broad Scotch—the broadest Aberdeen could produce, I think.

'Weel,' said he, 'I'll be keepin' a smairt lookoot for your boatie. I wish I could do mair; but ye'll ken yoursel'—name better—that merchant-ships are na muckle ower-manned thae times; an' I'm afraid ye'll no be gettin' help unless it's frae ane o' they passenger steamers or a mon-o'-war. An' it'll mebbe a month afore ye sicht ane or ither o' 'em; but if the leddy' (with another bow to Helen) 'wad accept o' a passage to Calcutta, she's welcome, vera welcome, an' Peter Macalister o' Newburgh—that's me—will be the pleased mon to hae her. An', he went on, turning to me, 'if ye like, Maister Vallance, ye can come wi' us. But, ye see, ye're a sailor-mon, an' can mak' shift weel aneuch wi' a soond ship an' twal months proveesions until help comes. Nor can the leddy's bein' awa frae ye mak' ony possible differ in the result, ae way or t'ither. An'—an'—weel, ye ken'—and the skipper suddenly stopped as if he had been shot, whilst Helen, divining what was coming, and what I never dreamt of, albeit my heart was in my boots, rose, her pale cheeks all aflame, and replied:

'Thank you very much, Captain Macalister, for your kind offer; but I could not think of leaving the *Hebe* as long as my friend, Mr Vallance, stays by her. Besides, would you advise me to desert my poor father's property when, perhaps, I may possibly be of use to Mr Vallance in helping him to save it?'

'Vera true, my dear young leddy,' replied the worthy skipper, getting redder than ever, but obviously impressed by the latter view of the case; 'it was just my ain bairns at hame that I was thinkin' on when I spoke, an' how I wadna muckle relish the notion o' ane o' them driftin' about the sea wi'— But there, there,' he broke off, feeling himself probably on perilous ground again, 'it's nae business o'

mine to interfere wi'. A' I can do is to keep a gude lookoot for the Major, an' that I will wi' pleasure. An' now I think on it, when we left Capetown they were expectin' Her Majesty's ship *Alexandra* in every day, a'most, frae the colonies—Australia, ye ken. If ye could but speak her ye'd be richt. Ye hae Greenwich time aboard, ye say. Weel, I'll stand by ye till noon, an' we can compare oor observations. An' i' the meantime, if ye like, I'll hae my men help us pit a reef in thae big tops'ls o' yours, an' snug yon foresail. Ye'll be a' the easier, gin it comes on a bit o' a blaw, ye ken.'

Thankfully accepting his kind offer, the four of us, reinforced by another two from the *Aurora*, put a single reef in each of the *Hebe's* topsails, and restowed the fore-course. By that time it was close on noon, and the captain, bidding us a hearty farewell, went aboard; and presently, discovering that our chronometers and position were exactly alike, he braced his yards up, dipped his ensign three times in token of farewell, whilst a hoarse roar of a cheer arose from the men in the barque's fore-rigging, as she stood across our stern with her port tacks aboard, and gradually faded away to a white speck on the horizon.

I think we felt lonely as we watched her, each probably fancying that perhaps it might be long before we saw again the faces of our kind or heard familiar speech.

'How glad I am you did not accept the captain's offer!' I remarked presently to Helen, as she left the wheel for a minute to give me a pull on a brace. 'I don't know what I should have done, all alone on the *Hebe*—gone mad, I expect.'

She blushed as her eyes met mine, and replied, smiling faintly, 'Captain Macalister evidently thought it would be the correct thing for me to do, and was within an ace of plainly saying so. You see, Mrs Grundy's influence extends even into the Indian Ocean. Perhaps the captain was right; but I could not bear the thought of leaving the *Hebe*. It seemed almost like an act of treachery to my poor father to desert her at the very first opportunity.'

This time, you will observe, there was nothing about me; but I was satisfied, nevertheless; possessing my soul in patience until the right place and moment should arrive, as arrive I felt, by now, they surely must.

Four days went by uneventfully, and I found

we were making southing rapidly, so much so that I reckoned another twenty-four hours would bring the *Hebe* well within the parallel of Cape Agulhas, and actually not many miles from the spot of ocean in which I had fallen overboard from the *Antelope*. During the nights our drift was inconsiderable, and always to the westward.

Since the *Aurora* left us there had been several heavy rain-squalls. To avoid these—although Helen wished me to come into the cabin—I had cleared out the deck-house forward, and in it on wet nights I pitched my camp. Lonely as it might be aft for the girl, I wished above all to refrain from anything that could bear the faintest resemblance to intrusion. And I think I did right; although Helen seemed just the least bit offended with me. However, the weather generally kept so fine that I was able to stay on deck aft most nights. Wet or dry I would have done so, but that, once coming up, and finding me there in the rain, she very decidedly expressed her intention of staying in it also, unless I either took shelter below with her or forward with Nan.

Although subject to intervals of brooding sadness, the girl had regained much of her cheery, hopeful nature, and used to keep me sweet and pleasant company whilst we sailed the brig, sometimes into the small hours. Then, when she went below, after giving me a hand to swing the yards, and I lay down for a brief rest with Nan at my feet, I would go over all our talk together, treasuring up every kind word, every deep and moving glance of my sweetheart's—for that such she was I more than hoped, although neither time nor place served to put the matter to the test. Of seeing the Major again I had quite given up all expectation. Helen, as she told me, had not another relative in the world. Clearly, at the very first opportunity I must marry her, and take her home to the vicarage. What should we do for a living? (I never in this connection thought of anything the Major might have left.) Well, there was a farm that I was to have worked, had I not chosen to seek a livelihood instead on 'these barren fields of wandering foam.' The lease would shortly be up, and I could resume it for myself and Helen; and it would be hard indeed if I couldn't knock some kind of a support out of it without having to come to the old people for help. What! Why, the cider alone from the big orchard at Birch Grove ought to keep us!

And so I dreamed, building my castles in the air. Romance! Why, air and ocean in these days were filled with the glamour of it—and of my new love!

We were very much together during this time. How could it be otherwise? And the more I saw of her the more I discovered what a fine character it was; what a noble soul and stainless mind gave grace and light and dignity to the beautiful being that I felt myself gradually gaining possession of.

But always—although in talking to you of her I have called her 'Helen'—it was, between us, Miss Fortescue and Mr Vallance. Most punctiliously did we keep up appearances; and if our eyes now and then spoke a language unmistakable, they were quickly lowered. Still, often, when her soft white hands met mine as we pulled on a rope together, and the breeze brushed a stray curl of hair across my cheek—often, I say, did I feel the need of self-control merge into a very torture of refraining from taking that graceful, yielding form into my arms and then and there declaring my love. But ever I fiercely fought against such temptation and beat my heart back into subjection, gaining the victory, looking at the last to my reward.

About this time it was that, being becalmed one evening, I sighted on our starboard beam a boat about three-quarters of a mile away. The *Hebe* herself was motionless, or nearly so; but the boat seemed drifting astern pretty quickly, probably in the set of some small current. In Helen's eyes, as she gazed, there was a perfect fever of sympathy and pity. And I could see that she yearned, as it were, to the sight of the helpless, tossing thing, and presently she spoke, almost to herself, but not so low as to prevent me catching her exclamation: 'If there should be any one sick and helpless—nigh dead in her!' And I knew by the sob she gave as she turned her eyes away that she was thinking of her father.

It was a mad thing for me to do, but I could not stand idly by and witness her distress, so I said: 'If you will help me to lower the dingey, I'll pull over and see if there is any-body in her.'

In a moment she jumped to the davit-falls; in another four or five I was pulling across the calm water. And then it seemed to suddenly dawn on her what a fatally foolish action her silent urging had led me into; and I saw her wave her hat, and heard her voice coming to

me in recall. But already I was half-way; and, determined to allow no room for after self-accusings or regrets, I kept steadily on until I was alongside the little derelict.

Looking over into her, I saw something that made me start back with fear and loathing; for there, prone in the bottom, lay four bodies, their features undistinguishable from decay; and, worse than all, scattered about there were terrible signs that, before their own deaths, they had been driven to the last dread resort of the castaway. But for these ghastly, mutilated fragments, there was not a thing in the boat with the corpses save her oars. Two of the men lay under the midship thwarts, nearly doubled up, as if their last moments had been spasms of agony; a third was right in the bows, eyeless from attacks of sea-birds—a shocking and a heart-rending spectacle—with features run together and discoloured until the face seemed a hideous putrid mask, mocking all semblance of humanity. The fourth corpse lay right aft on the grating, in much similar case to the other, only that in his hand he grasped a bare sheath-knife. All four, from their clothes, were men before the mast. There must, I could too easily see, have been others. Ugh! it was a gruesome sight; and giving the boat a shove off, I had slipped my oars to return, when, slueing to my push, she came round, stern towards me, and, to my unutterable horror, I read on it the words, '*Antelope*—London.'

I think, without using any extravagant figure of speech, I may say that, as my eyes caught the above inscription, my very soul shook within me at the new and terrible interest raised by it. But what could I do? There was the boat and its burden floating softly away! If I had possessed an axe, or any tool whatever fitted for the work, I would have pursued it, and driven a hole through its bottom, and let those rotting corpses sink to the depths below rather than wander the ocean in such terrific guise. But I had nothing; and the idea of groping for her plug beneath that festering mass repulsed my imagination to the verge of retching. And now glancing towards the *Hebe*, I noticed, with a thrill of alarm, how distant she appeared to be, looming indistinctly, a pale smudge, the very phantom of a ship, athwart a mist that was fast rising off the hot, oily water. Even as I stared there came to my ears the faint report of a gun, then another, and another, bearing something in the sound of them to my ears of quick impatience and distress.

Rapidly the smother thickened as, forgetting aught else, I pulled madly towards the noise of the shots—all the guide I had, for the brig was by this time invisible; and but for those dull echoes out of the mist I should have been quite bewildered—as likely as not making away from, in place of to, the *Hebe*. And how I blessed the presence of mind in my darling that had induced her to think of the only possible mode of indicating her whereabouts! Even when actually close alongside, almost hitting her, so thick was the fog, but for the report overhead I must have missed the vessel.

As I clambered on deck a dim figure came swiftly towards me, making with wide-open arms as if to embrace me; then all at once, with a quick cry, it seized both my hands, exclaiming: 'Oh, I thought I had lost you, and it nearly killed me!' Then, still holding my hands and laughing and sobbing hysterically, she led me aft, and brought food and drink to me, all the while, by turns, upbraiding herself for sending me on such an errand, and giving thanks to God for my safe return. And, secretly, it made me proud and happy to see such depths of emotion stirred for my sake in one usually so calm and self-possessed. But not until I found her, at last, soothed and tranquil would I tell her the result of my trip, and then not in full; although, I think, I need not have feared, had I so wished, seeing that for a time all things seemed swallowed up in deep thankfulness for my rescue and unharmed presence beside her.

But what of the *Antelope*? What awful misfortune could it be that had overtaken her, to send that ghastly boat-load of corpses to roam the sea unburied? Whatever it was, it must have been disaster, sudden and pitiless. For a moment it struck me as just possible that this very boat might have been lowered for me when I fell overboard, and that the ship had failed to pick her up. But on going back and thinking over the state of the weather at the time, I saw it was well-nigh incredible such a thing could happen. And surely I must have seen something of them next day! No, I felt certain in my own mind that the *Antelope* had come to grief in some terribly complete manner—a foreboding, as you will see later, fully realised.

A day or two after this incident, whilst at work in the galley, I heard Helen, at the wheel, cry out and point away on the port bow.

Jumping on to the fore-castle-head, I saw a vessel which, like the *Aurora*, had altered her

course to speak us. This one, however, had crept up during the night, unperceived until now. We still kept our distress-signal flying—not so much with the hope of speaking ships and borrowing men as to obtain information respecting the long-boat. Truth to tell, I think we were getting a little careless as regarded the keeping a strict lookout, especially after our experience with the *Aurora*. Evidently, to get the loan of men from any ordinary vessel was well-nigh hopeless; and, unaided, I began to think that our chances of arriving at Capetown, or anywhere else, were quite problematical, even if the weather held as fair as it had done for so long, which was quite too much to expect.

Within the last few days we had, too, struck an easterly current, and the *Hebe's* drift o' nights was pretty considerable. Clipper as she was, the brig, under her present canvas, was heavily handicapped. Nor, even with Helen for a relief at the wheel, could I sail her day and night. In fact, I never seriously attempted to do so.

From aloft I could now see the stranger plainly—a huge mass of canvas that at first it rather puzzled me to define, so bizarre did it look. But presently, as she swam more plainly into view, I made her out to be a four-masted barquentine, with enormously square fore-yards and towering main, mizzen, and jigger masts clothed in great stretches of fore and aft canvas, whilst from between them, and off her bowsprit and jib-boom, sprang regular flights of staysails and jibs—on the whole a very remarkable figure of a ship. I had, however, seen the rig before, mainly in timber-vessels hailing from Puget Sound or Vancouver, and had never felt any inclination to be shipmates with three forty-foot booms on a craft that a jib might shake all the sticks out of at once. As I watched her she luffed till all her widespread wings fluttered and shook like those of some monstrous sea-fowl preening itself; then, jibbing, she hoisted British colours and headed straight for the *Hebe*, although on the other tack she would have passed quite close enough to speak us.

Scanning the eastern horizon, I saw athwart the sky a faint stain of smoke, evidently from a steamer, but too far away to tell just yet in what direction she was travelling.

For the last couple of days we had been steering a south-west course, the wind allowing us to look up no higher; and that morning, for the first time, I had noticed such a marked fall in the barometer as set me seriously thinking of obtaining help to put an extra reef or two

in our topsails, and also get the dingey on board, for we had let it tow astern ever since my mad trip after the derelict boat. At the best ours was only higgledy-piggledy sort of navigation; and although far from tired of it in such company as my beautiful shipmate's, I would have been heartily pleased to see four or five strapping A.B.'s dumping down their round-bottomed bags in the *Hebe's* fore-castle, swarming up her ratlines, and putting all she could carry on her. However, the vessel and cargo I had by this time got to look upon as a kind of trust committed to my care for Helen and myself, and I was determined to take no risks. Help, I argued, must come at last, if only by means of vessels reporting me at their destination; and meanwhile I would do the best I could, without killing myself by unnecessary labour and worry. Truly, I had seen enough of ocean's awful work lately to make me careful; and that last experience! Why, even still, o' nights, I awoke wet with cold sweat, after dreaming that I was in the dingey, lashed alongside the other boat, with her dreadful, gruesome crew of dead and rotting men, whilst through the haze afar off came to me Helen's voice crying faintly and more faintly as we drifted away from each other.

CHAPTER VII.

A FIRST-CLASS CRUISER.



As the barquentine drew closer, she let go the sheets of her three fore and aft topsails, letting them hang to the crosstrees in great bunches of canvas. Then, squaring her fore-yards and hauling her tremendous booms amidships, she lay stationary, or nearly so, not a hundred yards away. Big and heavy as she was, her crew handled her like a top. Of fully 1200 tons burden, she was down the water aft, with a sheer in her from the elliptic stern to well forward of the fore-rigging, curving to a fine, free, gamecock-headed, graceful bow, which, added to her immensely lofty, raking masts and spreading breadths of canvas, gave her in some measure, to my eye, in spite of the red ensign streaming from her halcyards, the air of a great bird of prey about to pounce on the naked, defenceless *Hebe*.

All at once, amidships on her decks, I caught sight of something that made my heart jump

half-way to my mouth. The object was the stern of a boat, with on it a large gilt rising sun—an emblem the memory of which I was not likely to forget.

I said nothing to Helen, who, having helped me to back our main-topsail, was now standing near me; but taking the glasses, tried to make the thing out more plainly. Yes, there was no doubt about the device; but then other boats besides *the* one might carry such a mark. And, owing to the deep shadow cast by the main-boom and part of the sail, I could observe only a portion of the stern; the rest lay almost in darkness.

The barquentine was strongly manned, for fully five-and-twenty faces peered at us over her bulwarks. And such faces were they that, as I glanced at them, I made up my mind, at once, in this case at least, to forego my usual application for assistance. There was not a single white man amongst them—American negroes, Kanakas, Malays, and half-castes of varying grades of yellow, from that of a new-saddle to the deeper tint of a roasted coffee-bean. No, no, I wanted no such cattle as those on board the *Hebe*!

On a small monkey-poop, but for which she was flush fore and aft, stood a group of three men, all whites, who devoured the *Hebe* with their eyes, staring aloft and around in a gaze that came always back and settled on Helen and myself and Nan, who, as was her custom, now when anything was to be seen, stood near us, her two fore-feet cocked up on the brig's rail, and by the expression of her knowing face, criticising the stranger with might and main.

'Hello!' shouted one of the men in response to my hail of 'Barquentine, ahoy!' 'What's the matter with the brig? Where's your crowd got to? And what do you want?'

The speaker was a tall, sunburned, not ill-looking man, with black moustache and whiskers, clad in a sack suit of gray tweed, wearing a Cape 'smasher' hat of soft felt, and puffing leisurely at a big cigar. He might have been an American or an Englishman from his speech; as a matter of fact, he was, as we learned later, an Afrikander—father and mother Dutch—Algoa Bay born.

Very shortly I gave them the headlines of our story; asked the usual question about the boat; and explained that I'd be obliged for as much help as would shove another reef in our topsails.

As I finished, the man, without giving me any answer, turned to the others; and the three conversed apparently with some little excitement, to judge from their animated gestures. Then the tall one shouted: 'No; I haven't seen any boat like the one you describe; but we'll keep a good lookout. Who did you say was in her when she went adrift?'

Now, I had not mentioned that any one at all was in her. And my eye wandering, whilst he spoke, over the barquentine, I noticed that the main-gaff had been quietly lowered until the sail completely hid the boat; and this rendered me more than ever suspicious that there was something wrong. However, I replied that it was just possible that Major Fortescue, the owner of the brig, might have been in the long-boat.

'You ain't sure about the matter, then, eh?' asked the tall man.

'Well, no,' I said; 'we can't be sure, as nobody saw him go overboard. Still, there's every chance he did manage to pick her up and get into her.'

At this they had another confab, two of them apparently urging the speaker to do something that went against his grain. As they spoke they pointed to the brig repeatedly. It was all very curious; and I would have given much for a clear view of her decks, beginning to suspect, as I did, that they had the boat, and were simply arguing as to the advisableness, or otherwise, of sticking to it.

The vessels had by this drifted another hundred yards away from each other; and I was keeping an eye to the group aft, when all at once a startled exclamation from Helen drew my attention to a scuffle on the forepart of the barquentine. Then in another moment I saw a man, clad in a suit of bright blue dungaree, shake himself clear of the crowd, knock a couple of them head over heels, and jumping on to the stranger's rail, plunge overboard and swim for the *Hebe*.

'Martin! Martin!' suddenly screamed Helen, grasping my arm with both hands, 'it's my father!'

For a second I was thrown all aback with disbelief, for I had not seen the man's face, so quickly had the occurrence taken place. And how Helen could be so sure of the thing bothered me. But she kept repeating, 'It's my father! my father!' with a very insistence of certainty that there was no resisting. Glancing at the head of the swimmer, bobbing up

and down in the little waves, my first notion was to jump for the dingey's painter, slip down it into the boat, and scull to the man's assistance. But just then I noticed the barquentine lowering her quarter boat, and by the shouts and commands, plainly audible at that short distance, I made out that, at all risks, the escaped one was to be captured and brought back again. So, pausing right at the taffrail, I bent another line to the one already fastened to the painter, and telling Helen to run below and bring up the big express rifle, I let the dingey drift down towards the swimmer, who, I could see, was going well and strong. And now that I had a good view of his face coming towards me, I saw that it really was the old Major himself.

The barquentine's gig was, with three hands in her, pulling for the man, who had already covered half the distance between the vessel and the *Hebe's* dingey, but who, of course, stood no show against such odds, and was being rapidly overhauled. Asking Helen to tend the line and keep veering it out, I caught up the rifle, and taking careful aim, so as to injure none of the men, I sent a bullet clean through the bottom of the pursuing boat, making the white chips fly where it struck.

At the sound of the report the men ceased rowing and stared about them in astonishment, one of the fellows dropping his oar overboard in his flurry. By this time I saw that the dingey had drifted almost on to the Major, and that, bar accidents, he was safe. I, however, stood by for another shot. But the men in the boat had evidently had enough. One fellow was trying to stop the leak with his cap, whilst the others pulled back to the barquentine. Satisfied, I turned to watch the Major, and presently saw him clutch the side of the dingey, drag himself over it, and fall into her bottom, whilst Helen and I pulled like mad people on our line till we got him alongside. Then in a jiffy I was into the boat, helped the Major thence into the chains, and so on deck. He was well enough, apparently; and although blown by his swim and panting with the excitement of the chase, he found strength and breath to shake his fist at the barquentine—now hurriedly making sail—and swear terribly at her, even with Helen's arms around his neck and her sweet face pressed close to his purple unshaven cheeks. And what a figure of a Major it was, with the thin, blue cotton suit, a world too short for him in all ways, clinging

tight to his dripping body; his thick gray hair and long moustaches all ruffled and unkempt; hatless, shirtless, bootless, glassless! All at once catching sight of the rifle, he made a grab at it, aimed, and pulled the trigger; but it was empty; and with a growl of disgust, he flung it down again.

Happening just at this moment to look forward, I saw something that made me shout with surprise and delight. There, on the star-board bow, not more than a mile away, and steaming straight for us, was a great ironclad cruiser all aglitter in the sunlight with polished steel and brass and winking eyes of glass, a big mound of white water rising on each side of her lofty stem, volumes of smoke pouring from her cream-coloured 'thwartship funnels, spiteful little guns peering over her military tops, and from her halyards—held straight out like a painted card by the wind of her speed—flew the red cross flag of the British navy: altogether a most majestic and convincing sea-picture.

As I gazed an inspiration came to me, and turning to where the Major stood, alternately raving at the barquentine and caressing his daughter, I touched him on the shoulder, saying: 'Look, Major! We shall have her alongside directly. Had you not better go below and dress to receive her officers? She'll fix those friends of yours up presently.'

Slueing round, he stared for a minute in a bewildered sort of manner at the war-ship, as though hardly able to believe his eyes. Then, with a comprehensive glance at himself, he bolted down the companion like a rabbit into a burrow, followed almost at once by Helen.

In twenty minutes the ironclad was close abreast of us, the wash from the enormous mass making the *Hebe* roll to it as if in a sea-way. And as I looked up at the grim gun-studded sides, the crowds of hearty, wholesome English faces gazing at us over her rail forward; her uniformed officers quietly pacing the quarter-deck; the scarlet-coated sentry, rifle on shoulder, doing his march to and fro the bridge before the conning-tower; listened to the short word of command, the shrill pipe of the boatswain, and the hoarse roar of his mate's leathern lungs—as I took all this in, I say, I felt my heart swell with such mingled feelings of pride of country and security of knowledge that at last our troubles were over, that scarcely could I find voice enough to answer the hail of the white-headed captain as he leaned over the bridge towards me.

Before, however, I had a chance to explain things very fully, up came the Major, spick-and-span once more even to his glass, such good time had he made below—so far at least as concerned his outward appearance. But his temper seemed very little improved, nor was his eye impressed by the spectacle of the sea-dragon and her great crowd of faces all with their regards bent on him. Catching sight of the captain, he shouted in a voice hoarse with passion, whilst Nan, in her usual position, chewed her cud contemplatively at his side: 'I appeal to you, sir, as a British officer, to stop that ship from escaping,' making a wild flourish of his arm towards the barquentine as he spoke. 'They're pirates, sir! They've stolen my boat, and my diamond links and studs—a present sir, from the Viceroy of India himself when I cut down the nigger who tried to stab him at Rawal Pindi. Why, damme! it's robbery—barefaced robbery on the high seas. Stop 'em, sir! And if they won't stop, sink 'em! Why, by gad, sir, they put me in the fok'sle with a lot of infernal niggers, and made me—me—John Fortescue—after holding Her Most Gracious Majesty's commission for twenty years—wash their blasted plates and dishes for 'em!'

At this I saw a great, wide, silent grin ripple across the Jacks' faces forward, like the sudden wash of a short sea over a moored buoy. But aft no one so much as smiled. And suddenly it struck me that amongst those brown and bearded figures crowding the forward deck were one or two who—as they made curious grimaces, slapped their bare and mossy chests, and, as it were, itched all over to attract my attention without trenching on discipline—seemed wonderfully familiar. But before I could place them in my memory the captain of the cruiser spoke. 'Be sure, sir,' he replied courteously, 'that you shall have every satisfaction, as soon as I learn your story. Meanwhile we will signal the barquentine to heave-to;' and turning, he said something to another officer beside him.

In a minute a boat full of men dropped into the water, whilst a string of bright flags fluttered up the warship's halyards; in another two or three it was alongside, and there clambered on board the *Hebe* a young lieutenant—a typical British navy man, clean-shaven, bright-eyed, alert.

Stepping aft, he saluted us, saying: 'Captain Murray's compliments, gentlemen, and will you both come on board Her Majesty's ship *Alexandra*?'

As he spoke Helen rose through the companion beside him, radiant and smiling, her soft brown eyes sparkling with joy and affection. And though palpably astonished at the lovely apparition, the young fellow rose to the occasion, as the Major introduced him, and said something nice about such an unexpected honour and pleasure; adding that, as his intructions were to presently return and hold the brig until things were settled, Helen had better accompany us to the *Alexandra*. At that moment there was a loud report from the cruiser, and a long curl of smoke went eddying from her side.

'Ah!' exclaimed the lieutenant, 'the barquentine won't pay any attention to our signals apparently. That will help her to understand what we want. Have you a gangway for the lady, sir?' he asked. 'If you have, my men shall soon put it over.'

There was one lashed on the forward house, a very comfortable one; and at a word some of the men tumbled up and had it over the side, themselves remaining to see that the brig didn't run away during our absence. Then, offering his arm to Helen, he helped her down the steps with a grace and ease and skill born, I doubted not, of long and constant practice at Sydney, Auckland, Hobart, and other stations whose fair ones love everything able to sport the sign of the crown and the foul anchor, from the captain to the last-joined midshipman, with an energy and thoroughness that make those ports, *par excellence*, the happy hunting grounds of the service.

The Major—still grumbling, but in a lower, quieter note now that the first blow-off of angry steam had escaped—and myself followed; and the boat was about to push off, when Nan, thinking we meant to desert her, gave a dismal bleat and clattered down the steps, landing neatly on the knees of one of the Jacks.

'Let her come!' said the Major to the lieutenant. 'Let her come! You'll have the whole of the *Hebe's* crew together then.'

The lieutenant sat next Helen, and was evidently making the most of the short time at his disposal. But you mustn't think that I was the least bit jealous of his good-looking face and spruce uniform. Not I! Too often had I seen the love-light in my girl's eyes for that; and even now I caught a look in them, as they momentarily met mine, that assured me of my being able to laugh to scorn the wiles of the whole British navy if necessary.

On the quarter-deck of the *Alexandra* we were met by the captain himself, who conducted us to his private cabin, whence, presently, we could hear the thumping of the twin screws as the war-ship forged ahead again. Refreshments were placed on the table; and, by the captain's wish, I began our story, telling it shortly and with few details, to the time of the Major's leaving us, when he took it up.

His tumble had happened, it appeared, exactly as I guessed. In the very act of unbending the painter, overbalancing himself, down he went. He shouted on coming to the surface, but, of course, in vain. Then, giving up all hopes of regaining the brig, he swam after the boat, already some considerable distance away, and at last reached her, but too exhausted to do anything more even if he had known how. When daylight broke he could see nothing of the *Hebe*. She must have been, he thought, sailing for some time after he fell overboard, for then there was no sign of any squall rising. Nor did he ever once hear the report of a gun. But in any case, without his glass, even by day, he would probably have been unable to discern the brig at a distance.

Quite ignorant of how to manage the cutter, he appeared to have sailed erratically hither and thither until picked up by the barquentine. And then, to his rage and disgust, the captain, affecting altogether to disbelieve his story, and remarking that he was probably an escaped convict from the Andamans or some other penal settlement, confiscated his boat, jewellery, and clothes—which latter he had taken off and dried, putting on instead one of the dungaree suits left by the mutineers—and sent him forward into the fore-castle. But there—and the old Major turned a rich purple, whilst every hair in his moustache visibly quivered and bristled with rage as he told it—the men, finding him useless for practical purposes, made a 'Jimmy Ducks' of him, forcing him to scrub, wash up, sweep decks, and generally wait on them. At first he had indignantly refused; but after the 'niggers' had manhandled him pretty severely, and, as one might guess, put him in actual fear for his life, he had thought it best to submit, until at last came the chance of escape from the *Oceana Smith*, late of Vancouver, B.C., but now the property of a Dutch-English firm in Capetown.

'From beginning to end of both your experiences, interest and romance run each other close,' remarked the captain as the old gentle-

man finished; 'and I can, in one detail, cap yours, Mr Vallance, with regard to the *Antelope*. About half-way between here and Cape Leeuwin we picked up one of her boats with Captain Craigie and three seamen in her, all nearly spent. Originally there had been ten in her. These were the survivors. And I am afraid, after what you tell us about the other boat, that the four with us are the only ones who have escaped out of the whole ship's company. The *Antelope* caught fire, the flames spreading so rapidly that any preparations as regards provisions, &c., were out of the question. All that could be done was to pull clear of her as soon as possible. A terribly sad and sudden affair! The men recovered, and have joined the *Alexandra*; but their captain is still under the doctor's care. Now shall we go on deck and see what Major Fortescue's friends are doing? I think,' continued the fine, hearty-looking old officer as he offered his arm to Helen, 'that I heard my first lieutenant say our shot seemed to have done what our flags could not.'

Nearly a mile away lay the *Oceana Smith*, her three after-masts naked but for the topsails hanging in lumps at their heads; her foresail, fore-topgallant-sail, and royal were all clewed up; topsail-yard on the cap—everything about her betokening surrender, unconditional and complete. At quarter speed only the *Alexandra* steamed alongside and hailed. The same tall, dark-whiskered fellow (pointed out by the Major as her captain) replied, staring hard at his late captive standing near the first lieutenant.

'Come on board, sir,' said the latter when his question relating to the barquentine's name and port had been answered, 'and bring this gentleman's property with you; also your ship's papers.'

'I'm a British subject' (his name was Van Beers), replied the other sulkily, without stirring; 'and I'll see what Hofmeyr and a few of them have to say in the House about my being shot at, first by him' (pointing at me), 'and then by you, in this free-and-easy fashion.'

'Come on board, sir, at once,' repeated the lieutenant sternly. 'Or do you wish me to send a file of marines for you?'

Seeing that there was no help for it, the other got into his gig, and in a few minutes was conducted by a sub-lieutenant to us on the quarter-deck, carrying with him the Major's clothes and fallals all intact.

During the sort of informal court-martial

now held upon him by the captain and two of his lieutenants, the fellow protested, notwithstanding the indignant snorts of the angry Major, his belief that, when he picked him up, the latter was no better than an escaped convict who had stolen both boat and jewellery. If, he argued, making a decided point, there had been any ship's name, even, on the boat, he might have believed the story. But what with the quantity of provisions in her, the traces of occupation by several men, and the improbability of any vessel carrying such a craft upon her decks as asserted by the Major, why, he acted, he submitted, as most captains would have done in his place. As it was, his quarter-boat had been ruined by a shot from the brig; his voyage delayed by the action of the cruiser; and, taking things all round, he hoped, when he got back to Capetown, to receive thumping damages against both the owner of the brig and the government. And actually, when things came to be dissected coolly, it seemed, somehow, that Captain Van Beers' defence was not wholly without reason, nor his threats without possible foundation; nay, that, in one way of putting it, he held the big end of the stick. Captain Murray evidently thought so; for, after an aside with the Major and another with Van Beers, the latter came forward and apologised handsomely to the Major for his most unfortunate mistake. And when the Major, accepting his excuses, asked the captain to keep the cutter as some return, not only for picking him up, but for the injury sustained by the *Oceana's* quarter-boat, I think every one felt relieved.

'A very palpable scamp!' remarked Captain Murray as we watched the 'British subject' pulling off to his ship. 'And if we had not come up, Major, you'd have lost both boat and diamonds. I have heard of his firm as being anything but particular. The chances are he would have seized the brig and claimed salvage but for us. How quickly he took to his heels! You see, Major, it's only in sea-novels that the British navy man romps over the merchantman's decks and bullies him half out of his life. If that fellow had not been placated, very probably some Capetown attorney would have presently given H.M.S. *Alexandra* more trouble than enough; ay, and quite likely they'd have brought an action against our young friend here and yourself, as responsible owner of the brig, for an unprovoked and murderous attack on a boat's crew. Really, the affair has ended in the best way it could.'

The Major acquiesced, not very cheerfully, though. He badly wanted to teach those 'con-founded niggers' manners. And he never, to his dying day, forgot the indignities put upon him in the *Oceana's* fore-castle; always, when spinning the yarn in after-days, omitting any mention of the scrubbing and plate-washing.

'I think, Major,' said the commander of the war-ship as we steamed back to the *Hebe*, 'that we are going to have some heavy weather, or I wouldn't mind giving the brig a tow for a day or two. But if I put five hands and a bo's'n's mate aboard of her under Mr Vallance here, as skipper, that number should be ample to take her to Capetown. Of course, you and Miss Fortescue must be my guests as far as there, at any rate. Both of you have had quite enough of adventures for a spell, I am sure.—I am sorry to say, Mr Vallance,' he continued after the Major had thankfully accepted the invitation, 'that Captain Craigie is still too low to see any one. He, however, sends his regards, and says how rejoiced he is to hear of your safety, and that he hopes to meet you at the Cape.'

This was all very well; but the losing of Helen's company was somewhat of a facer. However, what could I do except acquiesce with as good a grace as possible! Also, had she not called me 'Martin' twice! And when at last, the luggage having been put into the man-o'-war's boat, and the time came for saying farewell, had she not said, her hand close grasped in mine: 'Come to us quickly. I shall feel each day a month until I see the *Hebe* again. Although you are losing your shipmate, do not believe but that she will hold you fast in her memory!'

I had something particular to say in reply; but just then the Major's voice broke in upon us with, 'Now then, Vallance, my boy, time's up!' A fast and pleasant trip to ye. Don't call me a deserter; but I've had enough of the *Hebe*. We'll sell her at the Cape, and all go home together. Gad, sir, no more sea! I'll buy a farm first!' And so on, and so on, until he was in the boat. Still, I was very well satisfied; for even his parting words sounded not without promise as regarded the future.

Thus it was in good spirits that I mustered my new crew—and yet not all new, for the three 'Antelopes' made part of it—and roused them round with a 'Cheerily, lads! let's shove the canvas on her—everything she can carry! Those kites up there are getting blue-mouldy for want of loosing!'

With a rush to the sound of my voice they jumped into her rigging, cast adrift, sheeted home, and hoisted, till, under every rag she had, the *Hebe* lay over to a light breeze as she had not done since I knew her.

The cruiser had stood by us. And now, after watching our start, her great screws began to thrash the water into foam once more; once more the bow wave rolled up till its salt spray wetted the royal arms blazoned in blue and gold at her head; the red cross flag dipped; the Major and his daughter, standing on the lower bridge, waved to us; from somewhere in her vast interior a band struck up 'Home, Sweet Home;' and my eyes grew a little dim as I hauled our ensign down for the last time, and the big battle-ship drew majestically ahead after playing her part, to us, of an ocean Providence.

Nan stood with her feet on the rail chewing her cud serenely; and to add some slight favour of the comic to it all, the burly, bearded 'Antelope' at the wheel, pointing with great forefinger to the goat, grinned, and said: 'Her looks A1, Mr Vallance, sir. It were me as give the ole gal a free passidge; an', by what I hears, I never done a better night's work.'

'No, Johnson, you never did,' I replied. 'I'm in your debt, and won't forget it; although, remember, it wasn't altogether for my sake you gave Nan a roving commission.'

I don't think, dear reader, that I have very much more to tell you; and if I wind up in the orthodox fashion—getting old-fashioned now for a story of to-day—it's because I see no way, even did I so desire, of escaping such ending. I am not altogether a convert to the new style of story beginning abruptly with 'Smith was sick,' and ending quite as abruptly with 'Smith died.' Therefore, I shall work this one out right to the pealing of those wedding-bells with the sound of which finished my last voyage as a sailor.

At Capetown we found Helen and her father, together with my old skipper, all staying at the house of a hospitable friend of the Major's (the same to whom Tippoo had been on his way when fate overtook him). Our adventures had naturally got noised abroad somewhat; and when we made our number to Green Point, our entering into the harbour was a sort of triumphant procession of small boats and steamers.

Happening, as we luckily did, to hit an empty

market, the *Hebe's* cargo sold very well. And the brig brought more than the Major gave for her; thus I found the old gentleman in the best of tempers. Nor, in all ways, ever did course of true love run smoother than mine and Helen's. The Major, after satisfying himself respecting that little matter of kinship with the Somersetshire Vallances, gave his consent at once. Helen's I won one moonlit night, under a clump of pink and white oleanders in our host's garden, finding that I had made no mistake, and that her heart had long been mine. All I had to press for was an early day. And we were married at old St George's the very next day, all Capetown coming to the wedding, together with the captain and officers of H.M.S. *Alexandra*. Captain Craigie acted as my best man—weak still, for their privations in the boat had been awful. 'Vallance,' said he as we parted, 'I shall never forget your kindness.' (I had been, curiously enough, through influence exercised by one of those other Vallances, then resident at Port Elizabeth, instrumental in procuring the captain a billet in the South African 'Harbours and Rivers.') 'But give the sea best, my lad. It's used you well on the whole. Don't tempt it any more. It's not to be trusted; see how it's served me!'

I don't know whether Nan can be reckoned as a bridesmaid, or rather matron; but certainly she was present at the ceremony. And besides wearing a silver collar, a present from the Major, some of the Capetown lasses had taken her in hand and gilded her horns from truck to keelson, making a very gorgeous goat of her.

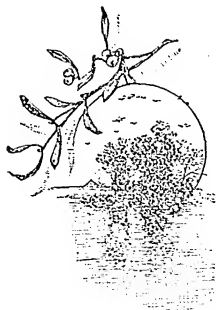
The Major's gift to us was a cheque on the Standard Bank of South Africa for the whole

value of the brig and her cargo, running into four figures whose initial number exceeded 'one'!

And taking Captain Craigie's advice, my own notions tending that way, to say nothing of Helen's, I gave up the sea. For a twelvemonth we stayed at Compton-on-Tor with the old folk. Then the Major, buying a great turreted, straggling place that he called the 'Bungalow,' at Combe Moham, facing Torbay, would have us go live with him and make his home ours. He is still hale and hearty, and spends much of his time at a certain club over in Torquay affected by the old Anglo-Indians who abound in that beautiful health-resort; and there, amongst these companions, he spins his tales of the Mutiny and the incident of saving the Viceroy's life. But the favourite with his military hearers is the story of his cruise in the *Hebe*, which, by dint of time, much embroidery, and frequent tellings, has assumed dimensions and aspect unrecognisable by any of the other actors therein. Nan, too, is well and thriving, demeaning herself as a goat with a history should do; looked up to by the Bungalow dogs, whom she keeps in order, and greatly respected by the domestic animals of Combe Moham.

And o' nights, sometimes, I lie awake and listen to the sea calling at the foot of the tall red cliffs, feeling a faint thrill of the wild longing that ever, now and again, comes to the land-dweller whose way aforetime has been upon the great deep. But at such moments I turn to Helen, lying at my side, or put my hand down towards the cot of my year-old son. And the sea calls still!

But not for me, not for me! I have made my last voyage.



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